THE BRITISH ACADEMY

The Relations between Arabs and Israelites prior to the Rise of Islam

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PREFACE

WHEN the present writer was invited by his colleagues of the British Academy to deliver three lectures on the Schweich Foundation dealing with early relations between Israelites and Arabs, he felt justified in accepting, having for a long series of years kept the subject in mind; it had been forced on his attention as a biographer of Mohammed, and as a contributor to various Dictionaries edited by the late Dr. Hastings, especially the *Dictionary of the Bible*, wherein many or most of the articles dealing with Arabia were entrusted to him. And although the Academy is far removed from political controversies, it might seem that the condition of Palestine which has resulted from the Great War renders the subject of peculiar interest at the present time.

Among the numerous reconstructions of Israelitish history which have appeared in recent years the present writer finds that of H. Winckler in his *Geschichte Israels* on the whole the most attractive, and is otherwise greatly indebted to this eminent Orientalist's books and articles. The monographs of N. Rhodokanakis present the greatest advance which the study of the South Arabian inscriptions has as yet made, and the material which they contain has been utilized in these Lectures. Mr. F. Krenkow, whose acquaintance with early Arabic poetry is probably unique, has furnished the writer with many valuable references. He has also to thank Dr. Büchler for answering a query dealing with some of the matter in Lecture III.

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CHIEF ABBREVIATIONS

CIH.	*Corpus Inscriptionum Himyariticarum.*
ED.	*Epigraphische Denkmäler aus Arabien, by D. H. Müller.*
MVAG.	*Mitteilungen der vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft.*
RES.	*Répertoire d'Epigraphie Sémitique.*
WZKM.	*Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes.*
ZDMG.	*Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft.*

LECTURE I

THE PRE-BIBLICAL PERIOD

THE relations between Arabia and Israel may be grouped into three periods. There is a prehistoric period for which we have no historical statements, but have to depend on inference obtained by methods which we believe to be scientific. There is a period for which Jewish historians furnish some materials, beginning with the Old Testament records, and ending with the able chronicler of the end of the Jewish state, Josephus. And there is a period for which we have to rely mainly on Moslem historians, who record how at one time Judaism held sway in South Arabia, and how when Islam commenced, it had to deal with Israelitish communities settled in the cradle of the new system, the Hijaz.

The Arabs and Israel illustrate respectively two different aspects of human tenacity. Of relationship between race and soil Arabia perhaps furnishes a unique example of persistence. The peninsula has undergone in historic times many a change; dynasties have succeeded and effaced each other; its old religions have yielded at times to Christianity and some other form of monotheism, and were all in the seventh century with rare exceptions, surviving to this day,[1] merged in Islam. But we hear of no immigrations into Arabia, whereby successive settlers have ousted or submerged each other, as has been the case in most of the countries of which we have chronicles, such as India or Persia, Greece, Italy, or England. Invaders have rarely succeeded in penetrating the deserts which guard the country, and such success as they have had has been ephemeral. The peninsula has sent out conquering hordes, perhaps more than once on the scale which followed the rise of Islam; its own population, the inhabitants of its oases, have never been swamped or forced back by conquering immigrants. Ethnologically speaking its population has remained the same through the ages.

On the other hand, Israel offers a rare example of persistence of ideas amid local instability. It is part of the merit of the

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[1] See Glaser, *Sammlung*, i. 129.

newer study of the Old Testament that it has brought out the causal connexion between the local instability and the fixity of the ideas. Judaism is in the highest degree monotheistic; but monotheism became dominant in Israel near the time of the first exile; for the scattered communities it became a bond such as they had not required before their separation. Judaism depends on a Bible, a written code or canon; it would seem that the importance of such a possession first came to be recognized during the Exile, and perhaps received full recognition only after the termination of the revived Jewish state.

It was not apparently Mohammed's design to expel the Jews from the Arabian peninsula, and indeed there are documents ascribed to him having the appearance of genuineness, wherein he expressly stipulates that so long as they perform their engagements there must be no interference with them. His second successor ruled that within the peninsula no religion save Islam should be tolerated, and there has never been a renewal of the old Jewish settlements, though there must have been some drifting of Jewish wanderers towards South Arabia, where some are to be found. In the Islamic states, which shortly after the Prophet's death founded capitals at a distance from Arabia, Jewish communities often prospered, and even furnished their Moslem masters with statesmen of distinction, especially in Egypt, Spain, and Mesopotamia. Islam, however, is not identical with Arabia, though it took its rise there; whence our subject does not include these later developments but terminates with the ruin of the Arabian settlements.

The name whereby the Arabian peninsula is known appears to have first been assigned it by the Greeks. In South Arabian inscriptions Arab is found in the sense of Bedouin, somewhat curiously, in the first inscription of the Mound of Marib,[1] as the nomad opposed to the resident population; the author there describes himself and his father as kings of various regions and of all their Arabs, both in mountain and plain (*tihamah*). This inscription is of the fifth century of our era; in those that are earlier the Arabs are mentioned as raiders,[2] and at times are distinguished from other communities, such as Himyar and Saba.[3] The evidence of these documents seems to favour the view of Hartmann that this is the true meaning of Arab, the Biblical usage of which will occupy us later. The first Arab

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[1] Glaser, 554, 2; MVAG. vi. 7.
[2] CIH. 79, 9.
[3] CIH. 343, 14; 397, 7.

said to be mentioned in historical inscriptions is one Gindibu, or Jundub, vassal of Bir-Idris of Damascus,[1] a city which at times indeed has been included in Arabia, but more usually been assigned to a different group. Assyrian inscriptions of the eighth century B. C. also know of a *matu arbaai*, 'land of the Arabs',[2] and the name is likely to have come from the Babylonians to the Persians and from them to the Greeks, who in accordance with their advanced geography gave it the extension which has become permanent.

The usage of the Qur'an is probably in favour of the view that Arab means Bedouin. The adjective is regularly applied to the language of the Sacred Book, and the theory prevailed for centuries that the genuine Arabic was to be learned of the Bedouins; the Prophet's biography sends him in his childhood to the desert in order that he should learn it in its purity. At the court of the early 'Abbasids tame Bedouins were kept for the purpose of replying to questions on grammar. In one passage (xxxiii. 20) the Arabs and the Bedouin (*baduna*) are identified. The notion that the correct speech was not that of the capitals, but of the nomad tribes, is surprising, as is also the complete absence from the Qur'an of any allusion to the existence of a literary language which has left monuments all over Arabia, some of the most elaborate approaching the Prophet's own time. The form in use in the Qur'an is regularly the plural *A'rab*, but it is improbable that any importance attaches to the assertion of the native lexicographers that the singular of this word '*urb* or '*arab* should be used of dwellers in towns. It must be observed that its antithesis is not, as is the case with *Badw*, a word meaning 'townsman', but '*ajam*, meaning 'foreigner', 'barbarian'. It appears like 'Arab' to refer primarily to language, and indeed originally to mean 'dumb',[3] whence its antithesis is sometimes 'correct-speaking'.[4]

It is somewhat remarkable that though the Qur'an declines to recognize any Arabic literature prior to itself, and exhibits

[1] KAT. ed. 3, p. 42; Winckler, MVAG. xviii. 92; Shalmaneser II (ninth century B.C.).
[2] Winckler, AOF. ii. 465; Weber in MVAG. vi. 58.
[3] Mutalammis in *Christian Arabic Poets*, i. 349, of a dog, يكلمه من حبه وهو أعجم.
[4] من فصيح وأعجم Buhturi, cited in المضنون به على غير أهله , p. 324. The word عمج is used of oblique motion. Rubah ed. Ahlwardt 13, 7. عربى is used in some sort of antithesis to بدوى Yaqut Udaba, i. 125, 7.

nothing but contempt for the poets, whose productions were at a later time so highly prized, it regards the Arabic language as what we might call a classical tongue. The excuses which we find in other cases where what has previously been only a spoken language becomes literary are absolutely wanting in this case. Latin writers are willing to call their language barbarous as compared with Greek, and at a later period those who produce classical works in the languages of Europe have a tendency to lay little store by their own idioms as compared with Latin; but in the Qur'an its own language is regarded as 'luminous', whereas other idioms are barbarous. Yet, as we know well, the Arabic of the Qur'an is very different both in grammar and vocabulary from the group of dialects of which monuments, dating back from Qur'anic times to more than a thousand years, are found all over the peninsula. The classical language of the peninsula should naturally have been not the patois of the Bedouins, but the idiom which had so long served for inscriptions commemorating laws, contracts, treaties, dedications, vows, epitaphs, and the like. Or, if this idiom had fallen out of use, we should expect the Qur'an to base itself on the literary monuments of the idiom which had displaced it, and which the pre-Islamic poetry claims to represent. If the tribes really had their stores of lays, the work of known poets, celebrating their victories and bewailing their defeats, the Qur'an ought not to represent the tribes whom it addresses as wholly illiterate. A classical language without a literature seems a contradiction in terms.

The assertions of the Qur'an on this subject would only become more surprising if archaeology succeeded in unearthing more inscriptions in classical Arabic, such as the remarkable monument in Nabataean characters which is given in M. Dussaud's collection,[1] and marks the tomb of a 'king of all the Arabs'. 'We should not have expected to find,' says this archaeologist, 'three centuries before the Prophet, a text which, apart from certain words borrowed from the Aramaic vocabulary, is in excellent classical Arabic.' This last phrase is somewhat excessive for a text of five lines of which several phrases are unintelligible. Nevertheless, such evidence of the existence of the classical dialect some centuries before the production of the Qur'an, though from the employment of the Nabataean alphabet it gives the appearance of being a casual exercise in committing a spoken

[1] *Mission dans la Syrie Moderne*, 1903, p. 315.

dialect to writing, is welcome confirmation of what otherwise was to be inferred from comparative grammar.

The peninsula has only on one occasion formed a political unity; the genius of Mohammed was able to effect this, but disintegration started anew with his death. When he arose, it was divided into independent areas and spheres of influence. As we trace history backwards from that time we find that an analogous condition predominates. At some period, however, one powerful state or another exercises hegemony over a large portion of the peninsula, but the physical features are not in favour of political unity. For all that there is a curious homogeneity among the inhabitants.

One who, after acquiring the language of the Old Testament, approaches the study of Arabic without any preconceived idea about their relative antiquity seems to find himself in possession of the key to every lock. He knows Hebrew roots which appear to have widely different senses; he finds in Arabic that these roots at times represent groups of different letters which in Hebrew have been amalgamated. Thus *to dig* and *to be ashamed* seem ideas that are utterly disconnected; in Hebrew they are represented by the same group of consonants; the Arabic shows that this is due to the confusion between two consonants, one of which had perhaps become unpronounceable in the later language. The conjugation of Hebrew verbs presents many an anomaly; the Arabic tables often show how these anomalies have arisen. At times where a Hebrew word has a highly abstract meaning, its Arabic analogue refers to something more concrete. This is the case with the highest of all abstractions, the verb *to be*. The Arabic shows that it properly means *to fall*, and comes to express the ultimate abstraction of existence in a manner analogous to our words *befall*, *accident*, or *case*. In general, when the student compares the sense of the Hebrew verbs with that of the corresponding Arabic, he finds that the latter take him a stage further back; show, if we may so say, edges which in the Hebrew usage have been polished off. Of many a word which is isolated in Hebrew the Arabic language exhibits a large kindred; such relics are like branches removed from the parent stock; in Arabia it still thrives.

Two familiar words may be taken as illustrations of the phenomenon which we are considering. The ordinary Hebrew verb for 'to speak' דבר has the same sense in Phoenician, but in Aramaic it means 'to manage'. In Arabic it has this latter

sense, but the group with which it is connected means 'back', 'behind', a sense which appears in the Hebrew word for 'innermost shrine', דביר. The sense of managing would seem clearly to come from that of steering a vessel, managing the rudder at the stern. Our own word 'govern' has the same history; it originally means to look after the helm. Now the transference of the idea of governing into that of commanding, and thence into that of speaking is easily paralleled; in Turkish, politeness frequently demands that in lieu of using the word for 'say' we should employ that which properly means 'command'. The ordinary Arabic group for 'say' survives in Hebrew only in the substantive קול meaning 'voice', 'sound'; one of its derivatives in Arabic means 'chieftain', but whether the original sense is that of 'commanding' or 'speaking' is not clear. The regular Hebrew for 'say' אמר in Arabic means 'command', and there is little doubt that the latter is the earlier sense. The ordinary Arabic for 'speak' is from a group which also means 'to wound'; this group is found in Hebrew also, but it has curiously a sense which combines the two notions, viz. 'reproach', a wounding with the tongue. The Hebrew usage seems to represent a kind of half-way house between the two Arabic senses. The Ethiopic for 'say' בהל, used in Arabic of solemn execrations, seems to survive in one verse of the Hebrew Bible in its original sense: 'Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath and say unto them (יבהלמו) in his sore displeasure' (Psalm ii. 5).

Presently the student observes one fact of primary importance. At times the orthography of Hebrew is etymological, somewhat resembling our own; letters are employed with abnormal phonetic value or with apparently no phonetic value, just as we write *schism* and pronounce *sism*, write *though* and pronounce *tho*. The only explanation of such a proceeding is that the script of an older language or of an older stage of the same language is preserved; we write *schism* because the word is taken from the Latin which borrowed it from the Greek. Now the Arabic orthography in several of these cases stands to the Hebrew in the relation of the Greek or Latin to the English. The working of sound-laws has altered the Hebrew pronunciation, but the older writing is retained.[1]

A difficulty which together with religious and national prejudices long obscured the inference to be drawn from this fact was the following. The earliest documents which we possess in

[1] This is notably the case where the vowel ō is represented by א or ה.

classical Arabic are many centuries later than the latest portions of the Hebrew Bible; whence, when Arabic is classified as a mediaeval language, this phrase is not inaccurate, if only the literature be considered. The mediaeval Jewish writers whose attention was struck by the similarity of Arabic to their sacred tongue, and who made many valuable observations in consequence, had in their minds the assumption that Hebrew must be the older and indeed the original language of mankind; and in attempting to explain the language of the Old Testament from that of the Caliphate which had become their mother tongue, the Jewish interpreters had to encounter the prejudice of their devout brethren.[1] But even when there is no such prejudice, it seems a doubtful proceeding to claim for a mediaeval language an antiquity superior to one which was spoken and written at any rate some centuries before the Christian era. The proceeding savours of anachronism.

This difficulty was to a great extent removed by the discovery of the South Arabian inscriptions; a discovery begun by English travellers and continued chiefly by French and Austrian explorers. The notion favoured by even so distinguished a savant as De Sacy, that the Arabs had no writing before Mohammed's time, was dispelled. Inscriptions in truly monumental alphabets accumulated to the number of some thousands; they were found to represent more than one kingdom and more than one dialect; the names, records, and dates, which they contained, cleared away some of the obscurity which veiled the pre-Islamic history of the peninsula. A series of dynasties and hegemonies could be made out, and the line was found to extend till near the commencement of the first pre-Christian millennium, if it did not go beyond that limit, in the opinion of some, to the commencement of a second millennium.[2] Whether the nations from whom these inscriptions, often lengthy and detailed, emanated, confined themselves to engraving on rigid substances, or committed their ideas to some more portable material as well, cannot now be ascertained;[3] hitherto no literature of theirs other than epigraphic has been discovered. But at least the source of the etymological orthography of Hebrew may be found in the written languages

[1] See Poznanski, ZDMG. lxx. 450.
[2] Glaser's latest views are given in the *Sammlung*.
[3] Hartmann, *die Arabische Frage*, p. 426, says we may be absolutely sure the Yemenites wrote on parchment also. 'Abid b. al-Abras alludes to writing on parchment, ed. Lyall 41, 2.

of ancient Arabia. Of the two words with which the Old Testament commences the first reproduces Arabian spelling, and the second an Arabian word. That word ברא, found as a Hebraism in the classical Arabic, is of common occurrence in these inscriptions in the sense *make, erect*, the meaning assigned to it by the LXX. A Sabaean would in fact have found little to puzzle him in the first verse of Genesis.

The Hebrew of the Bible cannot indeed be identified with any of the epigraphic dialects of Arabia, though it shows in some cases affinities of grammar, and in others of vocabulary, which the mediaeval Arabic does not share. Thus the Hebrew words for *wood* and *stone*, which are scarcely known in the classical dialect, are found in the inscriptions. Hence we cannot point to any particular region of Arabia whence on epigraphic evidence we could say that the Hebrew of the Bible had sprung. Only where we find these apparent Hebraisms in South Arabian inscriptions we are justified in thinking that we have traced these particular words or usages to their homes. They certainly did not come from Palestine to Saba; they may have come from Saba to Palestine.

Long before Europe had any acquaintance with the epigraphic languages, scholars were familiar with the ecclesiastical language of Abyssinia, generally called Ethiopic, whose descent can be traced by a series of stepping-stones from South Arabia, though the light which it furnishes on the South Arabian vocabulary is curiously scanty. The resemblance between this language and the Hebrew of the Bible in many of the commonest words is remarkable; the words for *to come* and *to go out*, *to take* and *to find* are the same, though the dialects used in the vast area which separates Palestine from Abyssinia seem all to have preferred others. Indeed, quite a considerable list can be compiled of coincidences between the Hebrew and the Ethiopic languages against the rest of the Semitic dialects. In other respects they are very different; the grammatical system of Ethiopic in some respects approximates to that of Arabic, and in some follows lines of its own. Here, too, the reasoning which has already been used holds good. That the ecclesiastical Ethiopic at a late time borrowed certain technicalities from the Hebrews seems certain; but there is no likelihood of its borrowing the commonest phrases which the conversation of every day requires; these must have been taken by migrants from the same region to their later and widely distant homes, in the one case Palestine, in the other Abyssinia.

If then we had any certain knowledge that the Habashah of South Arabia had been in the same quarters from time immemorial, we should be entitled to seek in that region the home of some of those families which afterwards were incorporated in one of the tribes which afterwards formed the agglomeration Israel. Of such permanence of location we have however no evidence.

The main point, however, is that to which attention has been called. Etymological orthography implies a pre-existing literary and classical language; and such a language existed in Arabia from very early times. It is quite clear that a wholly different system of writing, such as the cuneiform, cannot possibly explain the phenomenon with which we are dealing. The *a priori* argument against tracing Hebrew to Arabia (in the sense wherein such derivation can be scientifically imagined) which was furnished by the lateness of Arabic literature is answered by the inscriptions, representing a literary language which may well have been in use before the northern migration which peopled Palestine with Semitic races.

From the fact that the language of the Israelites is traceable to Arabia it does not necessarily follow that the origin of the people themselves is to be sought there. 'Canaanitish' is one of the names whereby Biblical writers designate their language,[1] and the idiom of the Israelites is known to have been identical with or nearly allied to those of their northern and eastern neighbours. We may imagine the ancestors of the Israelites to have immigrated simultaneously with the other races who spoke varieties of the same language, and to have won their hegemony as other tribes have won theirs in analogous cases: by the production of military chieftains and organizers of exceptional talent. This is the view which may be said to underlie the books of Judges and Samuel; in the obscure period which precedes their emergence into history the group of clans forming Israel are in precarious possession of their territory; there is constant war between the contiguous communities; and there is also war between the clans; victories are gained sometimes by the one, sometimes by the other. After a time a great leader arises in David of the tribe Judah, who not only can win battles and take cities, but knows besides how to consolidate his power. In the theory of the Book of Joshua the nation, already consolidated and organized, takes possession of a developed country, whose inhabitants it massacres or enslaves. Such a proceeding would also have

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[1] Halévy suggested that this might mean Phoenician.

historical analogies. Yet such immigrant invaders might adopt wholesale the language and institutions of those whom they conquered,[1] finding the civilization of the latter superior to their own. To posterity the nation is known only as the carrier of certain possessions, language, literature, religion, law, and the like.

Our derivation of the Israelites, or at least of their spiritual side, from Arabia is not then due to any theory of a series of migrations from that country, though the evidence in favour of such a series, going back into remote antiquity, seems very strong. It is based on language, though the history of institutions occasionally comes to our aid. The processes whereby languages change cannot indeed be reduced to laws of the rigidity which is found where we have to deal with inanimate nature; caprice, besides innumerable circumstances which remain unrecorded, interferes with general tendencies, at times accelerates them, and at times arbitrarily suspends them. For all that, an earlier and a later can be distinguished just as they can be in other products of the human mind; relationships can be discovered and their nature brought into terms of space and time. To this extent we may speak of a science of language; it cannot prophesy any more than geology can; but like geology it knows of fixed sequences, and to some extent with certainty can make out the story of the past.

If the South Arabian scripts can be traced to an antiquity of a thousand years and more B.C. it is clear that there can be no reason for deriving them from the Phoenician or Aramaic. And indeed the internal evidence is entirely against such a supposition; while the external evidence is not in its favour. In the early South Arabian scripts men have not yet determined which way they should write; numerous *boustrophedon* texts are found. The prevalent direction at the start is from right to left; but occasionally an inscription commences in the other direction. The direction of the writing is indicated by the forms of the letters; their outside is turned in the direction of the line. When in the time of Mohammed or a little earlier [2] the Aramaic script of twenty-two letters was employed to express the Arabic alphabet of twenty-eight, a certain number of the letters had to do double or treble duty, and these were afterwards differentiated

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[1] Thus the Bulgarians adopted the language of the Slavs whom they conquered. Bryce, *International Relations*, p. 55.

[2] The traditions are collected by Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*, 471.

by points. In the early Arabian script the kindred letters are in most cases represented by quite different signs; there is little evidence of the utilization of a borrowed alphabet such as we find in the case mentioned and in so many applications of the Roman and Arabic alphabets. Further, the rigid and monumental character of the South Arabian script stands to the Aramaic and Phoenician scripts in something of the relation of uncial to cursive. The perpendicular lines, the angles, and circles, have clearly been modified for the sake of ease and speed and owing to fashions in caligraphy. In the development of a script it would seem a safe rule that the rigid precedes the lax.

Nor is the process quite concealed whereby the rigid and angular characters of the old Arabian script became rounded and twisted. In a group of inscriptions belonging to the otherwise unknown kingdom of Libyan, found in North Arabia side by side with monuments in other dialects, the process is in course of accomplishment. Some of the letters have gone more than half way towards their Moabite and Phoenician forms. How the old Arabian alphabet was constructed is unknown; we have no record even of the order wherein the Sabaeans or Minaeans rehearsed their alphabet. It has however been pointed out that within that alphabet we can see a certain amount of evolution. The sign for H seems to be modified to represent two other gutturals. Above the S a circle is scratched in order to indicate a different sibilant,[1] somewhat as we write a dot below or a stroke above for the same purpose; only this development is not based on the northern alphabet, but has taken place within the language. It is curious that early forms of the Hellenic alphabet approximate in some cases to the Arabian script more than to the Phoenician or Aramaic whence the letter-names would indicate that the former had been derived. The *ΓΛΣ* in various old inscriptions are identical with or approximate to the old Arabian forms.[2] The question arises whether those Arabic place-names which appear on the map of ancient Greece, such as Askra 'the camp', Pindus 'the Mountain', Larissa 'the Hut',[3] which bear such a curious resemblance to the names left by the Islamic conquerors on the map of modern Spain, do not point to an early introduction of Arabian civilization with the Arabian

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[1] See Glaser, *Altjemenische Nachrichten*, p. 215.
[2] See the tables in Kirchhoff's work on the Greek alphabet.
[3] An English soldier in the great war told me he had been to 'Larissa', meaning al-'Arish. The French similarly call al-'Ara'ish Larache.

alphabet into Hellas before the Phoenician settlers introduced a different form.

The popular consciousness of the Israelites retained no trace of this Arabian origin. A theory of kinship indeed either survived or arose, such as we find in the case of Moab, a community which Israel cordially detested, but whose language was nearly identical with its own. Some facts must also have underlain the grouping of Arabian communities even to far away Hadramaut among the cousins of the Israelites, while certain northern tribes even had Abraham to their father. Only the Israelitish theory was not that Abraham had left his descendants in Arabia, but that they had migrated thither; he had himself come into Palestine from the East. The Israelites, however, had an idea that they were not indigenous in Palestine; the cities of which they had taken possession had had earlier founders and inhabitants; some had been stormed about the time when the recording of Israelitish history commenced: of others, the capture formed the subject of legends or lays. In some places the descendants of the original inhabitants survived as helots; in some there might even have been intermarriage between the conquerors and the conquered, and the distinction between the two was showing signs of evanescing.

And if the Israelites had no consciousness of having sprung from Arabia, the inhabitants of the peninsula similarly had no knowledge of having sprung from either Ishmael or from Eber, the eponymus of the Hebrews. The epigraphy of Arabia contains no allusions to the pedigrees which the Jewish books assign the tribes. The form wherein the Qur'an introduces the name Ishmael, *Isma'il*, with an initial vowel, shows that it is taken from Greeks or Syrians; the Arabian inscriptions, in which this word figures frequently as a personal name, write it correctly with an initial consonant Y. Had the North Arabians had any tradition of Ishmael as their ancestor, they would not have had to learn his name from the LXX or Peshitta. The form of the name Abraham which appears in the Qur'an also indicates that this personage was absolutely unknown before Mohammed's time; it was vocalized on the analogy of *Isma'il* and *Isra'il*, and so became *Ibrahim*; these vowels must have been given it by conjecture; so utterly unfamiliar were the northern Arabs with the name of the founder of their family! That in communities as highly advanced as the Minaeans and Sabaeans there was an indigenous mythology is indeed exceedingly likely; but therein

it would appear that the Arabian tribes were traced to the local gods, such as 'Athtar, Wadd, and the rest. In the inscriptions such affiliation sometimes is actually found.[1] We do not know whether these pedigrees were evolved by poets or how they arose; although, as will presently be seen, among the titles which in these documents are bestowed on the gods we find 'father', 'paternal uncle', and 'maternal uncle'. From these and similar facts the existence of an old Arabian mythology has rightly been inferred;[2] what we may certainly say about it is that it had no connexion with the pedigrees which the Israelitish documents furnish.

Since, then, the historical portions of the Old Testament look back on a period through which there was little likelihood of any trustworthy records surviving, the linguistic clue, the limitations of which have been recognized, is practically the only one which we can follow. And this enables us to trace the Israelites or at least their spiritual side to Arabia.

More interesting than the words and forms which the Hebrew language preserved from the ancient Arabian dialects are the *proper names*. Considering the wealth of the proper names which meet us in the Old Testament and the similar wealth which meets us in the inscriptions: considering further that the recorded names are those of an infinitesimal fraction of the populations, the coincidence is extraordinary. Sometimes we meet with actual names found in the Old Testament, such as כֶּשֶׂד,[3] שֶׂרַח,[4] שִׁמְעִי,[5] כָּלֵב נְבַט,[6] עזר[א],[7] ראבן,[8] חנני,[9] חפני,[10] צדק,[11] שמע,[12] נתן,[13]. The new Lihyani inscriptions add חור,[14] אמר,[15] אבשלם,[16] ארח,[17]. Compounds with אל are frequent, sometimes identical with those found in the Old Testament ישמעאל, עבדאל,[18] עדיאל,[19] שובאל,[20] חמואל,[21] קדמאל,[22] עזראל,[23] sometimes with the elements inverted, e.g. אלפדי [24] for the Biblical אלרפא פדהאל for the Biblical רפאל; sometimes אל is

[1] For the children of Almaqah, see Glaser, *Altjemenische Nachrichten*, p. 107; for the people of 'Athtar, CIH. 434; also Rhodokanakis, *Studien*, ii. 10.

[2] See Winckler in MVAG. vi. 154.

[3] D. H. Müller, Hofmuseum, 22.

[4] Ibid., 11. RES. 627

[5] CIH. 37

[6] CIH. 408.

[7] CIH.392.

[8] CIH. 395.

[9] CIH. 401.

[10] CIH. 338, 3 (חפנא).

[11] Hal. 509.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Hal. 154, 2.

[14] Jaussen, no. 85. p. 456.

[15] No. 108, p. 462.

[16] No. 121, p. 465.

[17] No. 137, p. 469.

[18] RES. 256

[19] Ibid. 641.

[20] CIH. 87.

[21] *Hofmuseum* 34.

[22] RES. 268.

[23] Lihyani, Jaussen, no. 124.

[24] CIH. 335

compounded with other elements, resulting in names which would occasion no surprise in the Old Testament, e.g.נצראל,[1] אלסעד,[2] אלרב.[3]

Other compound names which meet us in both collections areאבימלך,[4] אלידע,[5] and combinations of the elements in these.

Now what appears in the first place is that whereas some of these names are isolated in the Old Testament, in the South Arabian inscriptions they are members of large families. שֶׂרַח in Gen. xlvi. 17 is isolated, whether as a word or as a name; but in the inscriptions it is found side by side with ישרחאל and אלשרח, and the word itself 'expansion' belongs to a large family; in the Qur'an a Surah begins *alam nashrah*, 'have we not expanded thy breast?', and other usages of the verb and its derivatives are familiar. Similarlyנבט, which is isolated in the Old Testament as the name of Jeroboam's father, is found in the inscriptions as the surname of a king of Ma'in,[6] and one of Kamna,[7] beside נבטאל,[8] and the verb to which it belongs is used both in this language [9] and in the classical Arabic of opening up wells, and in the Qur'an of eliciting information. The name Athalyah עתליה is found in the simpler form עתל in a list of handmaids,[10] and this connects with an Arabic word signifying 'servant', 'slave '.

One most interesting case is the verbal element in the names יהואש and יאשיהו, which is obscure in Hebrew. Now a recently discovered Lihyani inscription [11] has by the side of עזריה(?) the name אשׂיה, where the elements of the name Joash are evidently inverted. But this word is clearly parallel to יאושׂאל, which is common, and the verbal element is an Arabic word *ās* for *aus*, he gave'.[12] The two Hebrew names then mean respectively Yaho gave' and 'Yaho shall give'. What claims our attention now is that a verb which meets us in the inscriptions and is known to the classical Arabic has left a trace in two Hebrew proper names, but is otherwise unknown to the language of the Bible.

In the second place, where the Hebrew proper names have obvious etymologies, there is at times reason for thinking that the true sense of the names is to be found in the Arabian and

[1] CIH. 434.
[2] CIH. 250.
[3] CIH. 401. D. H. Müller, ZDMG. xxxvii. 351, tries to separate אלעז from these.
[4] CIH. 137; as a woman's name 85.
[5] CIH. 355.
[6] Jaussen, p. 302, 2.
[7] CIH. 377.
[8] CIH. 377 comm.
[9] Hal. 520, 17.
[10] CIH. 287, 6.
[11] Jaussen 107.
[12] See Hariri, ed. de Sacy, 401. Ru'bah, ed. Ahlwardt, 25, 123; 26, 38.

not in the Jewish language. The element צרק in such names as יהוצרק from the Hebrew would seem to mean 'righteousness', 'Yaho is righteous'; but this group in the older language would rather mean 'to bestow',[1] and since these compounds ordinarily signify some relation between the deity and the bearer it is more likely that such a name means 'Bestowed by Yaho', and that Sadoq means, as it does in Arabic, 'a gift'. This may be the case with the element ירע in Jehoiada and similar names, since 'known of God' or 'knowing God' אלירע implies a stage in spiritual religion which seems to be beyond the old Arabian paganism. Now the group ירע in these dialects meant something different from 'to know', for which another group is used;[2] it meant rather 'to care for', 'keep in mind',[3] whence such a name meant originally 'cared for by Il'.[4]

It also appears that the element רם found in Abram, Jehoram, &c., has a similar history; it is used to form proper names in Arabian dialects, but we have as yet little reason for thinking it meant 'exalted';[5] for this idea is usually expressed by another group.[6] The Lihyani name כרמלה,[7] 'desire of Ilah', shows that רם in these names has its Arabic sense 'desire', and the name Miriam or Mariam is from this root also, meaning 'love' or 'desire'. If the Biblical Abram and Abraham are the same person, the orthography of the latter form is due to a variety which is found in the Minaean dialect, and has given rise to much discussion.

What we notice then is that these names which are found among both nations bear in themselves the evidence of being indigenous in Arabia. It was there that they were freshly coined, when the sense of both elements was clear; the emigrants retained the names or the style of nomenclature, but in the course of the ages the sense of one or at times of both elements

[1] CIH. 84, 9. According to Rhodokanakis, *Studien* ii. 65, 'to discharge an obligation'.

[2] שער.

[3] In a Qatabanian inscription (Rhodokanakis, *Grundsatz*, p. 33) שאלם שאל וידע, 'one who asks and keeps in mind the king's orders'.

[4] Compare CIH. 409, 7, אארח יסתידענהו 'commissions which he entrusts him with'; and the Arabic formula استودعك الله 'I commit you to God's keeping.' In Jaussen, p. 298, 29, 4, םידע is of uncertain sense.

[5] CIH. 448, 2 רימן and 3 מרים occur, and are connected by the translators with the idea of 'raising'. It is not clear that they are right.

[6] יפע

[7] Jaussen, 251. Cp. אלרם CIH. 397.

was lost or changed. An Israelite who was asked the sense of the name Jehoash would probably have been unable to reply or would have replied incorrectly; but no Arab would have any difficulty about explaining Ausil or Ya'usil. A Minaean would have explained Abraham with ease; an Israelite could only give it a fanciful etymology.

To these we may add the cases wherein the proper names retain elements which the Hebrew language has lost, but which one or other of the dialects of Arabia retains. Thus the representative of the tribe Gad in Num. vii. 42 is named Elyasaf son of D'uel. The first finds its interpretation in Sabaean texts, where the verb וסף is used of the bestowal of male children;[1] it means therefore 'Il has bestowed'. The second may well be interpreted from the Arabic of the Qur'an as ' Pray-Il', and this verb is found in the same sense in Sabaean.[2]

If, therefore, we could imagine a Hebrew of Biblical times coming to South Arabia, he would in numerous cases find that the names or types of name which in his own community were familiar, but of which the meaning was generally unknown or wrongly interpreted, were likewise in use in South Arabia, but still belonged to the language of the people. In Palestine, Jeroboam and Rehoboam were vaguely connected with the word meaning 'people'; but in Qataban, names of this type were to be found in immediate association with the god whose name formed their second element. When the same deed mentions an 'Amyada' and a Yashrah'am among the *arbiya* of the god 'Amm of Labakh, there can be no doubt that the Palestinian names are traced to their homes. The element אמר in the name of Aaron's son איתמר would reveal itself from comparison with numerous names like אבאמר, עמאמר, יתעאמר, contracted to יתעמר,[3] and the question might arise whether this last name was not the original whence the name of Aaron's son was to be derived.

One cannot help admiring in these old proper names the freedom and variety which they exhibit as compared with the later periods of both Jewish and Arabian history, when a few names of saints served as appellations for all the individuals. Robertson Smith's idea that men and gods formed a friendly community seems to find some confirmation in this fact. The gods were not connected in thought with men of past time, but were close at hand. Infants were named after them directly and not after saints who had been nearer to them.

[1] CIH. 86, 5.
[2] CIH. 411.
[3] CIH. 368.

Of equal or even of greater interest are the divine elements in these names which, as might be expected, retain some reminiscences of the older religion. The euphemism, 'the name' or his 'name' for the deity which we find in שמידע, the name of Gilead's son, has its parallel in a series of names of kings of Shimei;[1] unless, indeed, we are in this case mistaking for a euphemism what was actually a divine name. The most common element in both Jewish and Arabian compound names is אל. We must, however, reject the inference that has been drawn from this fact that this implies monotheism; since otherwise we should have to infer from the names *Theophrastos, Thukydides, Theognis, Theokritos*, &c., that the Hellenes were monotheists. Nor does the assertion that *Il* regularly means the moon-god [2] appear to be sufficiently established; on the contrary we learn from inscriptions that it is what we call a common noun, meaning *a* god, and that there were sufficient of them to form a community.[3] On the other hand, the use of the words אב 'father' and עם 'paternal uncle' as equivalents of the divine name, which we find in the Old Testament, is clearly a direct inheritance from Arabia. The discovery of this name עם in the inscriptions gave the etymology of the Biblical names עמרם, רחבעם, ירבעם, and there seems to be no sufficient reason for rejecting it. Indeed, the title עם was stereotyped as a divine name in the kingdom of Qataban, where this god performed services that could be specified, and was even divided into various personalities, with a sort of hierarchy between them;[4] had temples and priests;[5] and certain 'nurslings' called his *arbiya*, whom he 'reared' (*arbaya*), which clearly gives us the first element in Jeroboam 'May 'Aram rear', like Jerubbaal 'May Baal rear'. One of these inscriptions gives us the names of some of these nurslings, and ample privileges were conferred upon them by royal edict. The sense of the element *Ram* has already been seen; that of *Rahhab* (in Rehoboam), which also meets us in Arabian names,[6] is probably 'welcomed'.

The fatherhood of God is an idea with which we are familiar in the Old Testament, and so occasions no surprise in the Arabian texts. The substitution for this of the father's, more rarely the mother's, brother seems to us less congruous, though even a little

[1] CIH. 37.
[2] D. Nielsen, MVAG. xxi. 256.
[3] CIH. 366.
[4] RES. i. 311.
[5] Rhodokanakis, *Katabanische Texte*, p. 6.
[6] ירחב CIH. 415, ירחבם 364. רחבם Rhodokanakis, *Studien*, ii. 75. Compare, however, ראבעם *Katabanische Texte*, p. 121, 3.

knowledge of Islamic history acquaints us with cases which might suggest it. If the Prophet's biography possesses any credibility, that important personage was brought up and protected from persecution by his עם 'paternal uncle'. The ordinary constitutional law finds proof that the עם counts as a father. The האל 'mother's brother' is also a person to whom a man would naturally resort for protection. Mohammed's migration to Yathrib is explained by some on the ground that his mother's relatives were to be found there.

H. Winckler claimed to have found this very divine name (עם) in the last verse of the Ode which forms Deut. xxxii, and it is difficult to reject his conjecture.[1] The verse should according to him be rendered:

Praise, ye nations, 'Ammu,
For He will avenge the blood of his servants;
And repay vengeance to His enemies,
And 'Ammu will expiate his soil.

The variation between '*Am* and '*Ammu* seems to be parallel to what we meet with in the case of the divine names אלמקה and יה, and here we seem to have definitely the link which connects the 'Amm of the Qatabanian inscriptions with the second element in Rehoboam and Jeroboam.[2]

To the objection that had 'Amm been worshipped by the Israelites as he was by the Qatabanians, there would be some reference to this cult in the Prophets,[3] several replies suggest themselves. It is possible that the compounds which contain this element may have been retained by the immigrants, as were Eliada and Ishmael, and that with the obsolescence of the divine name 'Amm the old sense was forgotten. The names had been perpetuated from the prehistoric period in certain families, and the ordinary person knew no more their original sense than the normal Englishwoman could give the true etymology of Alexander or Catherine. Or, as doubtless was the case if Winckler's interpretation of the verse in Deuteronomy be correct, 'Amm was regarded as another name for the object of monotheistic worship, as was assuredly the case with Sur, and indeed Shaddai, which are unlikely to have been in origin

[1] MVAG. vi. 172.
[2] Fell in ZDMG. liv. 257 endeavours to interpret various epithets of 'Amm. His views seem in the highest degree problematic.
[3] B. Gray, *Studies in Hebrew Proper Names*.

identical with Yaho, but the use of which was permitted by even the advanced monotheism. The fact that the sense of Ab survived in Hebrew, whereas that of 'Amm was forgotten, is one of those freaks in language to which parallels are endless. Thus the Greeks retain old words for *father*, *mother*, and *daughter*, but introduce fresh ones for *brother* and *sister*. The Latins keep those for *father*, *mother*, *brother*, *sister*, but introduce new words for *daughter* and *son*. Even the tables of the numerals are not free from these vagaries. A word which is retained in Arabic for *each of two*, and in Hebrew for *of two sorts*, furnishes the normal word for *two* in Ethiopic.

Besides this god we have an occasional reference to the deity Gad,[1] whose existence crops up in connexion with the eponymus of the tribe Gad in Gen. xxx. 11, and perhaps in the name עזגד (Ezra ii. 12). The formula used in the former passage בגד 'by favour of Gad' is similar to that wherewith the votive tablets usually terminate. קינן, who in Genesis is a patriarch, appears in an inscription as a god.[2] A god חלף [3] seems to survive in the חלפי or Kleopas of the New Testament, which may stand to this deity in the relation of Mordecai to Marduk.

When the true sense of the names of gods and goddesses is discovered, it is usually found to mean something like *master* or *mistress*. Why Baal, which simply means 'master', should have been tabued, whereas Adon, which signifies the same, should have been retained, is hard to explain; if the former was associated with an alien cult, no less certainly was the latter. The persistence of the Il and 'Amm names through the incalculable period which extends back to the Palestinian immigration from Arabia is therefore curious evidence of the tenacity wherewith certain religious elements were retained amid the changes produced by reformers. And even if we supposed 'Amm to be consciously rejected as a divine name, it would not necessarily follow that monotheists would discard old names of persons which happened to contain that element. Among early Christian preachers we find an Apollos, among the fathers of the church there is a Dionysius, and a great Christian heresiarch was called after the Greek god of war. It is a curious thought that the patron saint of royalist France was a saint called after the dissolute god of wine.

The question whether the immigrants brought with them the

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[1] נעמנד CIH. 369.
[2] CIH. 402.
[3] Rhodokanakis, *Studien*, i. 59; ii. 9.

divine name YAHO, which ultimately gave their descendants their importance in the world is interesting; it seems to be settled by those names Joash and Josiah with which we have been dealing. Of these, as has been seen, the verbal element became utterly obsolete in the Hebrew language, but can be identified certainly with a familiar Arabic word on the evidence of the Lihyani inscriptions. That the divine name Yaho could be compounded by Palestinian Jews with an obsolete Arabic verb is unthinkable; the compound must have been made in pre-Palestinian times. And this leads to a conclusion which should have been reached on other grounds, viz. that the name Yaho has itself no original connexion with the verb 'to be'; and indeed (as has been seen) the group which corresponds with היה has not that sense in Arabic. The history of this name offers a curious resemblance to that of the Greek divine name Zeus. This had originally no connexion with the Greek verb meaning 'to live'; the connexion between the two is due to the working of sound-laws. Only the ancient theology, following here as elsewhere mainly etymological clues, grasped at the idea that Zeus meant 'life', and this notion secured for that deity the supremacy. This theology is as old as Homer; 'to live' is in his language to receive a function from Zeus. In this case, indeed, we are acquainted with the original sense of the name which the Sanskrit shows to be 'the sky'; the primary signification of Yaho is unknown, but we are in the same case with regard to many another divine name current in ancient Arabia. In Hebrew, however, the word seemed to signify 'being', a yet more universal concept than living, and hence a direction was given to Biblical theology which it followed from Exodus to Revelation.

That we have as yet no monuments of worshippers of Yaho from Arabia is true; but accident seems to play a great part in these matters. Had it not been for the discovery of the Qatabanian inscriptions we should have been unable to locate the worship of the god 'Amm, though the name is used in compounds far outside the limits of Qataban.

To recapitulate this argument: The Lihyani אשיה has evidently for its first element the Arabic *aus* 'gift', which appears in such names as אוֹשׂאל or in the simple formאוֹשׂ;[1] this אשׂיה is, on the other hand, clearly identical with the Hebrew יואש with inversion of elements, while the Hebrew form with the imperfect יאשיהו is

[1] Halévy, 263 and 224. In Nabataean אוֹשׂו Princeton, iv. A, 6, 24.

similarly comparable with the יאוש֗אל of the inscriptions. There is no reason for thinking that a verbal stem *AUSH* with the sense 'give' survived in Canaan, or was sufficiently known to be used in framing a new compound; hence the Hebrew names quoted must go back in their entirety to Arabian times. But this implies the worship of a deity *YAHO* or *YAH* in Arabia. And, in addition, this fact separates the divine name from the Hebrew verb meaning 'to be', which was afterwards employed to elicit its theological signification.

In the cases where the South Arabian texts offer names which admit of being interpreted as compounded with the element יה or יהו, we are perhaps justified in assuming this to be the case: a remarkable case is יהרם in Mass. 10, which appears to be identical with the Biblical יהורם.[1]

Besides these divine names not a few religious institutions would appear to have been brought from home. The old Arabians offered sacrifices, and it would seem by preference on the seventh day;[2] these were to be sound, but might be of either sex; they offered bulls, but also incense, for which they had altars, as likewise for fragrant herbs;[3] one of the technicalities of the Jewish altar of sacrifice seems to have been satisfactorily illustrated from a Minaean text.[4] Their sacrifices were at times, perhaps,[5] accompanied by stringed instruments, and some sort of purity legislation was connected with them.[6] Indeed there are several confessional tablets in existence which indicate a system of purity legislation corresponding in some technicalities of both language and practice very curiously with that of the Pentateuch.[7] The Arabs had centres of pilgrimage [8] and built shrines; and the shrines had rights to various dues, which must have gone to the priests or were conceded to various families. Tithes and first-fruits were offered, sometimes as a due,[9] sometimes as a thank-offering for some special service.[10] Their words for 'priests' differ indeed from those in use in Palestine; and the identification of a word thought to be the original of

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[1] Rhodokanakis, *Studien*, ii. 85.
[2] CIH. 382.
[3] Rhodokanakis, *Studien*, ii. 39.
[4] עזרה; see Weber in MVAG. vi. 8.
[5] CIH. 392, 10; the sense is not quite certain.
[6] Glaser, AJN., p. 96.
[7] First edited by D. H. Müller, *Hofmuseum* collection; they have often been dealt with since.
[8] Sab. Denkmäler 86.
[9] Rhodokanakis, *Katabanische Texte*, p. 12.
[10] Glaser, *Die Abessinier*, *etc*., p. 75.

Levite is uncertain.[1] In some inscriptions the era is from a priesthood.[2] The word for *prophet*, of which the Hebrew is certainly to be interpreted from the Arabic, has not yet been found; but a derivative is occasionally employed in the inscriptions, sometimes of promises made by men to gods, sometimes conversely, e.g. of an announcement or a promise made by a deity of the birth of a child.[3] The word for *vow* seems to be found in Lihyani texts,[4] but it is remarkable that the most familiar expression of a vow, the votive tablet, which abounds in Arabia and the Phoenician settlements, should appear to be unknown to the Jews. When psalmists exult in the thought that they will pay their vows and make public mention of the benefits which they have received, we should expect that vow, at times at any rate, to take the form of a commemorative tablet or an inscription recording the fact that they had prayed and not in vain. In the South Arabian inscriptions these tablets are usually said to have been engraved by the order of the deity in his oracle. Perhaps the real reason for their neglect by the Hebrews is that they are frequently associated with gifts of *images*, also ordered by the gods. When the plastic art was tabued, the inscriptions which went with the images are likely to have been included in the ban. And indeed the theology of the South Arabians appears to have gone a stage beyond that of those Israelites who worshipped a golden calf. The golden images offered to the South Arabian deities appear to have been no more than valuable works of art, conceivably in certain cases reminding the deity by their nature of the character of the service required of them; somewhat as we present some one who has taken an interest in the erection of a building with perhaps a silver trowel, which of itself suggests bricks and mortar. But the golden calf with the Israelites was not a commemorative gift, but an object of worship. If this superstition were to be effectively cured, the most drastic expedient was the prohibition of the plastic art; and together with the images dedicated the inscriptions recording the occasions whereon they had been ordered would be likely to be abolished. Nevertheless, this mode of commemorating a divine favour implies an interesting connexion of the Arabian gods with literature, and a belief that ability to read was widespread.

[1] Weber in MVAG. vi. 21 thinks of a high-priesthood with a central sanctuary among the Minaeans.
[2] Rhodokanakis, *Studien*, ii. 75.
[3] Ibid. 15.
[4] Jaussen, p. 374.

Finally, the word used in Hebrew for 'blasphemy' seems to be found in the same sense in a Minaean text.[1]

Migrations of tribes are often historically attested; we have various treatises on the subject in Arabic; one of the most interesting cases is the migration of the Banu Hilal and the Banu Sulaim into West Africa in the eleventh century, a migration organized by the vizier of the Fatimid Caliph to punish secession from his rule. An initial success attracts in such cases like the discovery of a new gold field; there is a country with cities and tilled fields ready for those who would seize it. Hence the tribes which start are joined or followed by crowds who are not in reality members of the tribes; only at such times, when recruits are desirable, there is no careful investigation of pedigrees. Probably it is this fact which accounts for the language which the Old Testament exhibits. We could not from the worship of the god 'Amm infer that the Israelites were Qatabanians; we could not from the preservation of a whole group of words which the North Arabic has discarded infer that they were a tribe which had emigrated from South Arabia. What, however, may be inferred is that the emigrants were recruited by elements from various South Arabian communities, and when their language became literary, those relics of their origin were retained. Among the immigrants there would probably be some who preserved some knowledge of the old caligraphy and orthography, which had reached so admirable a stage of development in South Arabia. Possibly these too might retain some vague memory of their ancestors' homes, and even some respect for the great names which had been in men's mouths there. Yet the struggles which the immigrants would have to encounter and the vicissitudes through which they would pass would be sufficient in the main to obliterate all memory of their origin and render them willing to accept any authoritative account. When Mohammed gave the North Arabians Abraham and Ishmael for their founders and ancestors there were no archaeological objections so far as we know, because the people had no historically attested account to set against the new system. Similarly the ingenious Greek who first told the Romans that they were the descendants of Aeneas and the Trojans could easily render his pedigree authoritative; for the Romans, like other communities which had emerged slowly from savagery to a sort of civilization, had no record from which this theory could be contradicted. To the

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[1] Rhodokanakis, *Studien*, i. 59.

modern evolutionist the older theory that the natives had sprung from oak and similar trees might seem more scientific; to the old Italian, unacquainted with these discoveries of science, the notion that their ancestry had been men of Troy seemed far more plausible. A pedigree is a luxury the need for which is only felt when men have attained to wealth and power, and which ceases to be needed when these have been lost. When the need arises it can no longer in ordinary cases be ascertained; a flattering conjecture has therefore to serve in lieu of a possibly less flattering, but quite unascertainable reality.

The process whereby the settlements of the immigrants were effected is illustrated in the narratives of Judges and Samuel, and the same recurs in the legends of the Arabs. If such enterprises are to be executed with success, there must be some organization and discipline. Some man, not unfrequently a man with a grievance, organizes a band which a little success soon swells. They do not migrate haphazard; scouting parties are sent to ascertain how the land lies; 'the scout', says an Arabic proverb, 'tells no lies to his employers', for he has himself to take part in the expedition, and his interests are therefore bound up with theirs. Doubtless other means of assuring success besides scientific investigation were regularly employed. The opinion of gods was ascertained; various omens and auguries entered into the process. Many an expedition of the sort must have ended in failure; the invaders encountered resistance and were overwhelmed. At times the immigrants found themselves welcomed; in regions depopulated by some disaster the arrival of fresh families might portend a renewal of prosperity. If human beings are unchanged, it is likely that the emigrants would not at once lose all attachment to the tribes whence they had sprung, and that communication of some sort would be instituted. Emigration would therefore for a time follow the same lines, the first emigrants having shown the way, which it would be easier for further drafts to follow.

Great importance attaches to the argument of Winckler [1] that the history of Arabia as learned from the inscriptions exhibits a series of organized states going back to immemorial antiquity. The life of the nomad, as he observes, is not anterior to, but coeval with that of the cultivator. The professions of both and the relations of the two are largely determined by water. The science of irrigation and the associated sciences of architecture

[1] MVAG. vi. 190 foll. Hartmann says much the same.

and mechanics which in post-Christian times fell into desuetude in Arabia were certainly cultivated there at an early period. Wonderful skill has been displayed by Dr. Rhodokanakis [1] in making out the engineering technicalities connected with the irrigation systems of Yemen, from inscriptions which enter into elaborate details, and further the legal technicalities connected with water-right, which also receive attention in the monuments. The word which merely means *road* in Ethiopic is here specialized in the sense of *canal*; of few among the technical terms is the interpretation quite so easy. A startling case wherein light is thrown by the South Arabian inscriptions on a passage of the Old Testament is Neb. iii. 8. where the Hebrew verb עזב is found in a sentence where its familiar sense 'leave' seems quite unsuitable: *And they left Jerusalem unto the broad wall*. The word is, however, of common occurrence in South Arabian texts in the sense *restore*, as in the inscription Glaser 544 on the mound of Marib, where the king states that he *restored* or *rebuilt* the mound also up to a certain point.[2] The same word is presently put by the author in the mouth of Sanballat: *What are the wretched Jews doing? Shall they restore for themselves, shall they sacrifice, shall they complete?* It might well seem that the word rendered sacrifice had also some technical meaning, on which the source indicated has as yet thrown no light.

The trade which these states pursued and which formed the source of their wealth required routes which were guarded by fortresses or forts. The wealth which they accumulated led to the acquisition of comforts, to the evolution of tastes, and to the exercise of ingenuity in gratifying them; epigraphy does not often illustrate these matters, but such vessels as the two in the British Museum with four compartments for different sorts of perfume indicate a high standard of luxury.

In the light of these objects and the accompanying texts we are learning to think of the immigrants not as nomads in the savage or semi-savage state, but as colonists carrying with them to their new homes the memories of a developed political organization, with usages and practices, having a history behind them. The judge, שופט, who forms the ruler of the earlier Israelitish communities, and was known to the Phoenicians also, though forgotten in North Arabia, appears in the inscriptions of Qataban,

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[1] *Studien*, ii.

[2] MVAG. vi. 366. D. H. Müller identified the phrase. מעזבה of the Mishnah is evidently connected with it.

where he is identified with the *kabir* or *sheikh* of the tribe, who copies the law and enforces both that and the edicts issued by the god.[1] Fines, sometimes commutable with blows, inflicted with a rod, שבט, were prescribed for violations of the law.[2] The affairs of the community were to some extent managed by an assembly, and the Hebrew words for *nation* and *assembly* (גוי and קהל), which North Arabian has lost, crop up in South Arabian texts.[3] And we seem to find the רצי כסף 'coins of silver', of Ps. lxviii. 31, in one of the architectural inscriptions,[4] as well as the אמה, or 'cubit' for the standard of measure.

While then the linguistic evidence justifies us in finding the earliest home of the Israelites as of other Semites in Arabia, that evidence furnishes no data for locating their ancestry in one part of the peninsula rather than another, or for determining their relations to the other Semitic communities that are found in Palestine. From what we can gather about the language and institutions of the other Palestinian communities (and only in the case of the Phoenicians is this considerable) the relation of the Israelites to the rest would seem analogous to that of the Athenians and Spartans to the other Hellenic groups, or of the Romans to the other Italian communities. The name Israel is said to be found in an Egyptian record of about 1250 B.C., and though its Arabic etymology, if there be one, is obscure, it may well go back into the remote antiquity of Arabia, as does Ishmael. Recent opinions which are worth considering, though the evidence adduced for them is insufficient, are that the name was from the first applied to a confederation, to which such a title as *Il is king* would be appropriate, and that the rare name Jeshurun was invented at a later time for a similar purpose. The tribes constituting the confederation need not have been related by any recent ties; and as in some other cases—such as the sects of Islam—what was known *a priori* was that they were a certain number, e.g. twelve, rather than the actual names of those who constituted it.

The migrations of the Arab tribes since the rise of Islam are, as has been seen, partially recorded, and even form the subject of treatises; in the lands whither the great wave of Arab conquest carried them the tribes for a time remained distinct, though intruders were not easily kept out. For the long period

[1] Rhodokanakis, *Katabanische Texte*, p. 6, 1. 5.
[2] Ibid., *Studien*, ii. 142.
[3] Ibid., *der Grundsatz der Öffentlichkeit*, p. 41.
[4] CIH. 380, 6.

which receives flashes of light from the inscriptions a few such migrations can be traced. It would seem, however, that the overflow of Arabia in ancient times periodically found a vent to the north, and the maps of Asia Minor and even Greece seem to exhibit names which like those on the map of modern Spain which have survived from the Islamic conquest give evidence of prehistoric colonization from Arabia. To such an emigration it is likely that Palestine and Syria owe their old Semitic populations; comparable to the great Islamic emigration, yet with one great difference. The Arabs who under the Islamic banner swamped Africa, Spain, and other countries were directed from a centre and started with an organization whose framework had a tendency to remain amid ceaseless dislocation and internal struggles. The emigration which introduced the Semites into Palestine and the adjoining countries appears to have been more haphazard, without plan, and without the decent pretext of spreading a new religion. The incalculable element of personal ability is what chiefly determines the future of such immigrants. It brings one tribe or another to the forefront, circumscribes groups, determines hegemonies, constructs nations. Nothing, however, but continuous chronicles and biographies can give posterity a clear account of these sequences; and unless all sides are represented, what posterity learns is biassed and imperfect. Archaeology has in a few cases enabled it to hear both sides in the record of a struggle. Possibly it may succeed in Palestine in clearing up some of the darkness which covers the immigration from Arabia. A very few inscriptions in the South Arabian character found in Palestine would furnish us with the links which are wanting in the history of the Semitic communities. They would establish that continuity which is inferred from language and institutions, even if they contained no names which could be identified with those in the sacred records and furnished no clue to the motives which dictated the migrations. Emanating from the people themselves they would be free from the obscurities and misunderstandings which the records of foreigners such as the Egyptians and Assyrians necessarily harbour. The steps whereby Sabaean was transformed into Ethiopic are now traceable through a series of inscriptions discovered on Abyssinian soil. Why may we not hope for a similar series exhibiting the transformation of the old Arabian language into Hebrew?

LECTURE II

THE BIBLICAL PERIOD

IN some respects continuity was maintained by the Semitic race in its northern migration; a South Arabian would not ordinarily have been detected as a foreigner by his name in North Arabia, in Canaan, or even in the Phoenician colonies. But as groups consolidated and states came into being from fortified centres, fresh nationalities arose, with a natural tendency to accentuate differences in order to maintain independence and isolation. And where a community aspires to hegemony, to reduce its neighbours to inferiority, if it permits them to survive, reasons have to be thought out to render that position justifiable. It is a curious tribute to the sense of justice that such ingenuity should have to be exercised. In the history of the East this repeatedly occurs, frequently with recourse to divine ordinance, sometimes by appeals to other sentiments, sometimes by political fictions. What determines hegemony is force, the power to win battles and disarm opposition; but if the hegemony can somehow be made palatable to the subject communities, there is economy, for effort need not be unrestrictedly exercised, and vigilance can occasionally be relaxed. If it is to be maintained, the community whose privilege it is to be should be distinguished by some badges from their inferiors. Their origin must be different and their dress, language, and customs had best be different. Autochthony, being descended from the original inhabitants of the land, might as against aliens be a claim to hegemony; but where the ruling is itself established amongst such communities, it should not itself be autochthonous.

In two cases it is noticeable that the traditions of Genesis assign seniority to other branches of the family. Ishmael, it admits, was the older son of Abraham, only his mother was ignoble, whence a younger son, Isaac, was the heir. Esau, identified with Edom, was the elder son of Isaac; only he was outwitted by his brother, who secured his rights. Owing to the interest in consequence felt in Edom the compiler of Genesis has preserved a whole chapter of its history, which at least interprets

the seniority of Esau in the sense that Edom became an organized community with sovereigns of its own before Israel had acquired any similar organization. The names which that chapter contains are so numerous that even so enterprising a commentator as Glaser shrank from the task of dealing with them all; they exhibit many a familiar Arabic name or phrase. Interesting as are the Edomite researches of the archaeologist Musil, it may be doubted whether he has succeeded in throwing any light on this page of an ancient chronicle. Ishmael is so clearly a personal name, and one of such frequent occurrence in the inscriptions, that we cannot doubt that a tribe called after an eponymus of this name once existed, and the Israelites may have extended the appellation just as at a later time the tribe of Tay furnished the Syrians with a name for the Arab nation which was adopted in Persia and Armenia and was extended to Moslems generally.

The ground for making Ishmael the elder son of Abraham is most likely what Josephus suggests: the difference in the age at which the rite associated with that patriarch was practised. That the neighbouring communities, Moab, Ammon, and Edom should be represented as remaining in continuous possession of their lands whereas Israel quitted theirs to return after many centuries is doubtless recorded in order to account for the late period at which Israel claimed and to some extent exercised hegemony over the country which all these races shared. That a main idea in the Pentateuch is to demonstrate a claim to the land against powers which might endeavour to dispossess the Israelites has recently been argued with some skill.[1] The statement that the Edomites had settled down as a nation under some recognized government, earlier than the Israelites probably comes nearer the natural theory of evolution than any other in the Pentateuch, as it implies that the groups of tribes lived in a disorganized condition like the Israelites of the Judges but in course of time were welded into nations as capable leaders presented themselves.

Besides the continuity exhibited in the proper names. some more links must at one time have bound the new to the old. If the clue found in the etymological writing be a sound one, some literary monuments must have accompanied the migration capable of serving as the models whence the newer literatures gradually took shape. And among such links the sayings or rather writings of the wise men whose fame Solomon is said to

[1] Erbt, *die Hebräer*.

have surpassed are likely to have had a place. From the old literary monuments the newer must have been developed by a process similar to that which afterwards took place when the Romance literatures were developed from Latin. In the latter case the old school-books were retained so that the continuity with antiquity was never actually snapped. In the case of the Palestinian languages it seems that the old school-books disappeared. No series was preserved to which the new theological system would have required accommodation. Something of the sort afterwards occurred when a new Arabic literature was started with a book copied direct from divine tablets. The argument ascribed to Omar is felt to be plausible; if other books agree with the revelation they are superfluous; if they differ from it they are dangerous.

There seems to be no definite allusion in the Old Testament to the language of the Arabs, though there are parts of it which may well go back to an Arabic original. Such a part is the Appendix to the Book of Proverbs which ostensibly contains the words of sages of Massa, a place affiliated to Ishmael. Of the authors' names Agur seems identical with one found in inscriptions,[1] whereas another, Yaqeh, forms an element in proper names also found in these monuments,[2] and, indeed, belongs to a verb which is of very common occurrence in them and most probably designates divine instructions. The actual equivalent וקה as a proper name has recently been discovered in a Minaean inscription.[3] The name מואל occurring in the same is very like the למואל of chap. xxxi. The former is a woman's name; and since in the chapter of Proverbs the words of Lemuel are those 'which his mother taught him', the suspicion occurs that this name is not to be interpreted 'belonging to Il', but 'belonging to Mauil'; and if this be so the same form of affiliation may explain the difficult לאיתיאל of xxx. 1, in which case Aytiel could be regarded as one of the many names which signify 'Given by Ii'. Mau'il probably means 'refuge';[4] the French archaeologists, however, prefer to read the name, Ma'wa'il meaning 'residence of Il', and this is somewhat favoured by the occurrence of a form מואלת elsewhere.

It is in chap. xxx. 31 that we find the word אלקום, of which on the whole the most probable account is that it is North

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[1] אגרם CIH. 20, 3.
[2] יקהמלך CIH. 428.
[3] Jaussen, p. 261.
[4] *Christian Arabic Poets*, i. 353.

Arabic,[1] in which language it is a familiar phrase for 'the men', here meaning the troops; and, indeed, in Arabia the word is still employed for troops of raiders,[2] a sense to which close parallels can be found in the Qur'an. For this word we find גדוד, the usual Hebrew for 'troop', in Job xxix. 25, which seems to render this interpretation of the text in Proverbs certain; for in both the confidence which the presence of his army confers upon the king is noted. This use of 'the men' for 'the fighting men' is extended in Arabic to the synonymous word *nās*; 'the children of the men' in some countries meant the families of the fighting men. Why the Hebrew compiler should have retained an Arabic word in this case is doubtless a puzzle; but one who is familiar with ancient and modern translations meets with many a puzzle of the sort.[3] Another phrase found in the same chapter which seems to be pure Arabic is הון in the sense of 'ease off!' (xxx. 15, 16). This may be vocalized either *hawwin* or *hawn*; perhaps the usage of the latter phrase is nearer the sense required than that of the former.[4] The prayer xxx. הטריפני לחם חקי which may be regarded as the original of *Give us this day our daily bread*, may contain an Arabic word and an Arabic construction; but this is not quite certain.[5]

What might seem to be the clearest case of an Arabic word in the Old Testament is Ezekiel's אלגכיש by the side of גכיש in Job; the alternation is curiously like that between Gabi and Algabi which appear in different editions of Bädeker's *Switzerland* as the name of a locality in that country. If this word be Arabic, as is said to be the case with some names of Swiss localities, it should mean 'The Tax-collector'. It must be admitted that the Arabic interpretation of the Hebrew words is by no means obvious. Ezekiel thinks of stones which fall from heaven like the *siggil* of the Qur'an, which the indigenous commentators say

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[1] Littmann, Princeton D. iv, claims to have found the word in an inscription, where it seems to stand for a god.

[2] Glaser, *Sammlung*, p. 88; Philby, *Heart of Arabia*, i. 176.

[3] A king is compared to a he-goat (תיש) in respect of قراع الخطوب 'dashing at affairs' in an old line quoted Muqtataf lx. 133 — أنت كالكلب فى حفاظك للود وكالتيس فى قراع الخطوب

[4] Abu Hayyan, *On Friendship*, p. 39, quotes a line أحبب حبيبك هوناً رويداً .

Ibn al-Rumi, i. 481, uses هَوْنَك very similarly: هونك ما مثلى بمسترهب .

[5] הטריפני The corresponding Arabic verb means simply 'give to'.

is a Persian compound meaning 'clay-stone'. In Job the reference is evidently to something of great value and rarity, which does not seem applicable to clay. The nearest to which we can get seems to be an Arabic word for *gypsum*,[1] and indeed identical with it, which perhaps is too late in its appearance to be used for interpretation of the Old Testament. In this case we must suspend our judgement for the present.[2]

A. work included in the Canon which ostensibly comes from Arabia is the Book of Job, whose rich vocabulary can indeed at times be interpreted from the classical Arabic, yet perhaps to no greater an extent than other poetical parts of the Old Testament. The location of the speakers is still, save in the case of Eliphaz, imperfectly known; but that the north of Arabia is the supposed theatre may well be assumed: for Taima, the home of Eliphaz, is mentioned together with Dedan and Buz, the home of Elihu, by Jeremiah (xxv, 23), and the seat of Dedan is now known to be al-'Ula, not far from Taima, through the researches of Jaussen and Savignac. 'Us though separated by Jeremiah from these places, is named by him together with the '*Ereb*. Job's herds are raided by Saba, a community, which, as will be seen, extended its raids far to the north of the peninsula, and which in a tablet erected by a Minaean, is said to have assailed him in the house of Ben Sufan;[3] which unfortunately we cannot at present locate. It is less certain who are the Kasdim who raided Job's camels; if the writer is maintaining local colour, he is probably thinking of some tribe which might have the same hunting grounds as Saba; possibly of *Qasd*, which figures in the neighbourhood of Saba in a Qatabanian inscription,[4] though it must be admitted that the first letter does not correspond accurately. Job, in the course of the dialogue, makes an allusion to the caravans of Taima and of Saba (vi. 19), who experienced the 'treachery' of the streams after which the Arabs suppose pools in their language to be named.[5] The phrase used for 'caravans' in the latter case has the appearance of a technicality, but it has not yet been identified in the inscriptions.[6] Mention, however, of trading

[1] Philby, *The Heart of Arabia*, i. 19, says, 'gypsum occurs in great quantities everywhere in the limestone desert'.

[2] אלקטיות of Ma'asroth 3, § 7, looks like Arabic.

[3] CIH. 84.

[4] Rhodokanakis, *Katabanische Texte*, p. 77.

[5] غدير from غدر .

[6] The verb הלך seems to be found in Qatabanian, Rhodokanakis, p. 122, 9, in some sense similar to the Hebrew.

expeditions is rare in those which have hitherto been published. Job's sympathy with their misfortunes is surprising since he was himself so recently a sufferer from their misdeeds. The dialogue otherwise avoids proper names, even where the sense of the passage seems to demand their introduction (xxi. 28).

The reference to the story of Job in the Qur'an is evidently derived from the Old Testament; but the Arabian archaeologists tell a story which bears some resemblance to that of Job, without involving any of the same names. In the commentary on the phrase in the First Mu'allaqah[1] *Many a valley desolate as the Ass's Belly* it is stated that this was a valley called after its one-time owner, Himar 'the Ass'. This person had practised piety for forty years, when his ten sons who were out hunting were slain by a thunderbolt. In consequence of this their father vowed that he would no longer serve a Deity who dealt with his sons in this way; in punishment for this resolve his property was all destroyed and his valley was turned into a desert. Eliphaz tells a somewhat similar story (xxii. 15-18), though his reference may be rather to some one whom prosperity had made impious. The character which the Arabic tale illustrates is that to which reference is made in the Qur'an (xxii. 11): 'There are some men who serve God on the verge; if good befall, he resteth satisfied therein, but if any tribulation befall him, he turneth himself round, with the loss of this world and the world to come.' This story is, unlike that of our book of Job, dramatic, in the sense that the situation at the end is not the same as it was at the beginning. In the Prologue, and to some extent the Epilogue, of our book, the hero stands the test; his friends draw wrong inferences, but he speaks what is right about God. In the dialogue he regards himself as injured by God, against whom he would bring an action, if he only knew how. 'Maintaining his integrity' in the prologue means maintaining his piety, in the dialogue (xxvii. 5) asserting his innocence.

I do not propose to argue that the prose parts of the work are by a different hand from the poetical parts, for the assumption that authors of books are invariably consistent and logical appears to be fallacious. The citations from Arabic works show that the particular problem which the situation in this book suggests had attracted the attention of Arabs no less than of others: supposing a man to meet with undeserved misfortune, what will be his attitude, and what that of others, from foolish women to the

[1] In Arnold's edition, v. 49.

wisest among men? And how, too, is such undeserved misfortune to be justified? The assumption of the Prologue that such events are to be explained as experiments for the purpose of testing men's sincerity is repeatedly adopted in the Qur'an, though the consequence which this involves, and which is fatal to God's omniscience, is in this book avoided by supposing the experiment to be for the sake of informing others; these others again cannot be human beings, who can never know whether the evil was or was not deserved; hence a community of 'sons of God', possessed of superhuman knowledge, is required. These 'sons of God' figure in the dialogue also, as having been present at the creation of the world (xxxviii. 7), and their identity with the stars is at least suggested. Job does not in the end learn that he has been the subject of an experiment, but is shown that he is not qualified to find fault with the doings of the Creator of the world. We are not even told whether the Accuser has to withdraw his charge against Job or can boast that it has been substantiated. It seems probable that the latter is what is intended. If Satan had been refuted, he could have been represented as abashed in the divine company. Reverence and even propriety exclude a scene wherein he can proclaim that he was after all in the right.

If, however, the author's theory of the true explanation of evil is to be maintained, this semi-divine assembly is required; and one of the speakers, Eliphaz, knows by revelation (iv. 18) that these beings, who are immaterial, on the one hand are superior to mankind, but on the other are not infallible.

It cannot be said that the religious texts which South Arabian epigraphy has up to this date furnished do much to illustrate the theology of the prologue, the epilogue, or the discourses. There are, indeed, some inscriptions of an early date wherein a congregation of divine beings is mentioned;[1] gods, patrons, and two other classes. Since they are all installed in the same building, it is unlikely that the last two are mischievous powers, as some have thought.[2] Monuments were erected by the Arabs wherein gods and patrons were thanked for deliverance from disease, rescue from the vengeance of enemies, offspring, fruits, and the like; but we have none as yet which acknowledges help against the accuser who traverses the earth.

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[1] CIH. 366; Rhodokanakis, *Studien*, ii. 9, differs.

[2] Glaser, AJN. 106. Yet חבל reminds the reader of خابل 'Satan'. Buhturi, i. 154, خذ من خابل سلوة لمختبل.

Of the speakers in Job, the only one whose attitude seems even to approximate to that of the old religion is Elihu, who at least suggests that what a man should do when evil befalls him is to *dream* the cause and so obtain a revelation of the proper expiation. That, he says, requires the assistance of some interceding angel, but any one of a thousand can give it. It is noticeable that Eliphaz claims to have had a veridical dream; its purpose was, however, not to furnish guidance for a particular situation, but to communicate to him a certain doctrine. He cites this as the authority for his opinions, just as at a later stage he cites the maxims which he had heard from a long line of ancestors. When, irritated by Job's contradiction, he proceeds to enumerate the offences committed by the latter, he confines himself to violations of morality, where we should expect an Arab to think of some neglect of ritual; for the confessional tablets which we possess are concerned with offences of this type. The offences, conscious or unconscious, are the concern of the god invoked, who mercifully overlooks them. Even Job in enumerating his acts of piety notices how he has abstained from kissing his hand to the moon (xxxi. 27). We are clearly in what is sometimes called the fastidious atmosphere of the prophetic portions of the Old Testament, where the superstitions which dominated the ancient world are discarded. A few seem, indeed, to be countenanced in Job's execration of his birthday, but these are scarcely to be taken seriously. When Eliphaz tries to think of all the atrocities which Job can have committed (chap. xxii), he can only think of acts which advanced morality condemns; forbidden foods, forbidden days and the like are not mentioned in the list. And Job's account of his exemplary conduct is very nearly as free from superstition. The advice which we should expect from the sages would take the form of spells, magical prayers, complicated forms of penance, and the like; that which it actually takes is identical with what the philosophical statesman Ibn al-'Amid gave his master Rukn al-daulah when driven to the last ditch. *This moment all the land you own is that which is covered by your tents, and here are your enemies gathered together for the purpose of wresting that remainder from your grasp. There is no refuge for you except God Almighty, so purify your heart to Him, and make in secret communion with Him a resolve to do good to the Moslem community and to all mankind. Vow solemnly that you will without fail do good works and kind deeds*.[1]

[1] *Eclipse of the Abbasid Caliphate*, ii. 148.

An inscription which is hard to interpret gives us an idea of the procedure which among these Arabian communities would have been thought wise in such a case as Job's. Some people whose land was afflicted with hail and some other form of trouble asked the god Almaqah of the mountain Alu for advice. This god sends them to another of his manifestations, Almaqah of Hirran, who gives a variety of instructions, and some further procedure is dictated by a sign seen in the sanctuary of yet another manifestation of this god. These complicated proceedings were effective; the fields were saved from hail and the other plague.[1] As is often the case, many of the phrases in the tablet are obscure, and except for the sacrifices ordered we cannot say for certain what were the steps which the suppliants had to take. This much is clear, that the first oracle sends them to the second with the promise of a commemorative tablet, and the second oracle furnishes them with the necessary instructions. In other inscriptions we learn that the causes of disasters were often not easy to discover; when it was ascertained what god had been offended and why, steps were taken to remove his displeasure and a tablet was engraved for the instruction of future generations.[2]

Cure of disease is one of the subjects mentioned in the inscriptions, and was sometimes purchased of some divine being with an offer. One Nasa-Karib by an offer of a statue and a sacrifice induced his 'patron', Ta'lab Riyam, to cure his brother of a disease.[3] The same personage received a statue of gold for saving one of his worshippers from disease and helping him in some other way which is less clear.[4] One of the forms of Almaqah cured a man of a disease which had lasted eight months;[5] and in addition bestowed on him great success in war. Numerous as were Job's misfortunes, if the inscriptions are to be believed, one or other of the Arabian gods or patrons was quite ready to remedy each one of them. Even the attacks of Sabaean plunderers were averted by the god Almaqah, who stipulated for a votive tablet.[6] But in the Hebrew book little attention is bestowed on cures and remedies; not one of the friends offers to compensate Job in any way for his losses: the question which occupies the speakers' minds is *why* these troubles have come about.

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[1] CIH. 74. Rhodokanakis, *Grundsatz*, p. 11, interprets some phrases differently.
[2] Something of the sort is the subject of CIH. 405.
[3] CIH. 336.
[4] CIH. 352.
[5] CIH. 407, 10.
[6] CIH. 84.

Now if we might judge by the analogy of other philosophical dialogues, the speakers would naturally be persons with whom certain opinions were associated, or representatives of communities wherein certain doctrines were supposed to be current. There is some likelihood that the speakers in Job belong to the former class, and are to be reckoned with those wise men of the East whose names are casually preserved by the author of the Kings, but of whom no other notice is preserved; in the case of Eliphaz and still more in that of Elihu there is some character-drawing, and it is possible that the insistence on the youth of the latter is to apologize for an anachronism in introducing him with the others. The brilliancy of the dialogue and the richness of the vocabulary—of which unfortunately much is obscure—evoke general admiration; but even with violent alteration it does not seem possible to produce any clear distinction between the standpoints of the three friends, or to see why Job is in the right as against them.

Whereas, then, the community whence this work emanated seems to have little in common with those Arabian communities who were so lavish with their testimonials to their local deities, the matter of the dialogue exhibits little that is specifically Israelitish. The monotheistic atmosphere of the speakers is serener than that of the Prophets; the latter are troubled by an idolatrous environment, whereas to the speakers in Job the alternative to monotheism is atheism. They are not acquainted with any 'peculiar people', though Eliphaz is proud of his autochthony, and the purity of his lineage, whereas Job expresses in no measured terms his contempt for the pariahs (xxx. 1-10), whom he describes somewhat as modern travellers describe them;[1] while on the other hand he has views on the subject of slavery (xxxi. 14) which are surprising in their modernness. The passage about the pariahs, who in his time were troglodytes, seems to point to some particular region, but not necessarily South Arabia, where the pariahs seem to be concentrated in our time.

Hence on the one hand the atmosphere of the work is different from that which the inscriptions of the four kingdoms of Arabia — Ma'in, Saba, Qataban, and Hadramaut — reveal; on the other hand, if more akin to that of Israelitish prophecy, it is still distinct from it.

Whether Elihu's speeches form part of the original plan of the work or not—and about this opinions are divided—he clearly is

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[1] See Maltzan, *Reise in Arabien*, p. 182 foll.

supposed to have found some way whereby without impugning the divine justice he can admit Job's innocence. The obvious way wherein this can be done is to suggest that the offence which had incurred the divine displeasure was some act of whose heinousness Job had been ignorant. In both Hebraic and classical antiquity inquiry was made in such cases of some 'prophet, priest, or dreamer', who could explain the cause of the divine wrath and the means whereby it could be averted. In order to have recourse to this expedient the persons possessing the necessary powers must be accessible; and we might reasonably expect that Elihu would name some place where such persons were to be found. This he very clearly fails to do; he appears to hold both in chap. xxxiii and in chap. xxxvi that such revelation will be personal; the afflicted individual will receive a communication explaining what offence he has committed and how it is to be expiated, and if he carries out the instructions which he thus receives everything will be made right. The language which he will then use will be similar to that of the confessional tablets, whose authors proclaim to the world that they had sinned.[1] Elihu seems to admit that the expiation required may be something very considerable,[2] but much of his language is unintelligible. Our text certainly throws no light on the main difficulty, which is how the necessary revelation is to be obtained. Job himself professes ignorance of the place where God is to be found (xxiii. 3), which seems a considerable step in advance of the Israelitish as well as of the Arabian systems; for a community to whom such a confession could be made can have had no sanctuaries. Even the sceptic Koheleth knows of a 'house of God' (iv. 17), and the euphemism introduced into the Old Testament 'to be seen before the Lord' in lieu of 'to see the face of the Lord' does not get rid of the doctrine that there was a known place where God was to be found. The monotheism of Job and his friends is too fastidious to take any notice of such beliefs. He cannot, like Hezekiah, go to the house of God and spread a letter before the Lord (Isa. xxxvii. 14), because he knows of no such house; he looks for God in front and behind, to the right and to the left, but not in any 'House of Il', such as any region where the Semitic languages were spoken could show. Nor does Elihu or any other of the speakers condescend to name any such supposed dwelling of the Deity. When God at last speaks, it is from the whirlwind. The stage which religion has

[1] Job xxxiii. 27; Hal. 682, 4.
[2] Job xxxvi. 18.

reached seems as far above that of the Psalmists and even the Prophets as it is above that of the South Arabian paganism.

Do we know of any community outside Israel during the period wherein this book can have been composed where there was this atmosphere? Perhaps all that can be said is that we are entirely ignorant of the conditions prevailing in the lands to which the speakers in this Book are assigned, except indeed for Taima, where we learn from an Aramaic inscription that polytheism was dominant in historic times. That 'Us and Buz were actual communities we learn from Jeremiah; and the name Na'amah, even if we have no other mention of it, excites no suspicion, as the word is of frequent occurrence in both the North Arabian and the South Arabian tongues, and is a likely place-name anywhere in Arabia. Some faint traces of monotheism have indeed been discovered in the region now identified with the ancient Dedan, but scarcely sufficient for us to build any theory upon. So far as the literary art of the work goes, it implies the power of working out a plan, which is rare among the Semitic peoples, though the elaboration of many of the more lengthy South Arabian inscriptions would prevent our being surprised if we came across a store of monuments of this kind emanating from one of those kingdoms. Only, as has been seen, those kingdoms were not monotheistic; there is nothing in the monuments hitherto discovered which indicates the existence of any theory of creation and administration of the world by a single power. Their gods are not far removed from the members of the community; Almaqah makes a present of lands to a couple of his worshippers, and these presently decide to return the land to him.[1] To such a being Elihu's question could not apply — What wilt thou give unto Him or what will He take from thy hand? (xxxv. 7). A scoundrel injures gods and men alike. Men are warned in a Sabaean inscription against doing anything which would harm the gods.[2]

The fact, however, cannot be neglected that both in the supplement to the Book of Proverbs and in the Book of Job the sayings of sages ostensibly belonging to North Arabia are thought worthy of a place in the religious literature of the Jews. The former might be compared with the sayings of the Arabian sage Luqman, which Mohammed quotes in the Qur'an,[3] making it clear that this personage, whenever he may have existed, was a monotheist; he warns against *shirk* or polytheism, condemned in

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[1] CIH. 376.
[2] Hal. 147, 5.
[3] xxxi. 11.

the monotheistic inscription, which is in any case pre-Mohammedan, and with which we shall deal later. If D. H. Mailer's reading in a Lihyani inscription שעת הנץ [1] with the interpretation 'sect of the law' could be trusted, we might find evidence here of the existence of a monotheistic sect unconnected with the Israelites, of unascertained antiquity. The chief of this 'sect' is mentioned in another inscription, which has something to do with a tomb, but is otherwise unintelligible;[2] the father of the sculptor was named Marilah, 'man of God', which a monotheist may have borne. These researches have revealed the names of states even more utterly forgotten than the Massa to which the Old Testament occasionally alludes, and those of which the books of Job and Jeremiah preserve the memory. Until we find further evidence we must acquiesce in the hints which the Old Testament gives with regard to their theology. It is doubtless clear that the author of Job has been guided in his choice of divine names by the theory which we find in Exodus that the names known to the patriarchs were *El* and *Shaddai*, whence, though he himself employs the tetragrammaton he studiously avoids it in the dialogue.

It is, however, difficult to imagine that one who could elaborate a scheme of the sort which the structure of the book displays could have left it in the state wherein we have it. From the analogy of other philosophical dialogues, as has been seen, we should expect that the speakers would be persons celebrated for particular opinions or representative of communities in which particular opinions were current. It should not be possible to find Job saying the same as his accusers, or the ultimate solution which is left for the Deity anticipated by any of the speakers. Further, even though the view taken by three opponents of Job might be in the main the same, we should expect that they would arrive at it by different lines of inquiry. These expectations follow from the very nature of a discussion, and it is well known that they are by no means realized; hence it seems likely that the form wherein we possess the book is very different from that wherein it left the author's hands. It is conceivable that at some time only fragments of the original work could be got together and that these were arranged according to the ability of an editor, who was not felicitous in his execution of his task. It is possible that some of the views put forward by the Arabian sages were too far removed from Israelitish monotheism to justify

[1] ED. 23; Jaussen, p. 428.
[2] ED. 73; Jaussen, p. 438.

their inclusion in a work put into the hands of Israelites. One, indeed, who attached any value to the statements of the votive tablets would be able to cite numerous cases wherein troubles equal to those of Job had been remedied by the intervention of some god or patron; and the ascetic solution, viz. that none of the things which Job misses so sorely were in themselves worth having, is one which is likely to have occurred to any one who reflected profoundly on the world-problem, but may have been omitted as too paradoxical for an audience with whom piety was the avenue to material prosperity. Apart then from the difficulty of interpreting individual verses, there are reasons for thinking that the work has undergone great changes in the course of its transmission. Some of these may have been accidental, due to the vicissitudes which overtook the national literature of the Israelites, which at times, it would appear, there were determined efforts to destroy; while others were intentional, arising from a desire to accommodate to the system of one community a work originally intended for another.

The impression left by many chapters of this book on those who see little or no evidence of serious textual corruption is that of inadequate translation. This would account for the difficulty of assigning a meaning to many (or most) of the verses in various chapters. And since the problems discussed seem to be no better suited to Arabia than to any other land, it is hard to find a reason why if the work were not originally Arabian it should be located in that country. Persons capable of discharging the functions of the raiders who seize Job's possessions could be found elsewhere. Further, it is difficult to interpret the words of Bildad in viii. 8, where Job is referred to the former generation and the researches of their fathers, otherwise than of an existing literature, wherein those researches were recorded. The ancients to whom he refers are contrasted with the ephemeral representatives of his own age: possibly that earlier generation like the antediluvians of Genesis was longer-lived. He proceeds to quote what appear to be aphorisms drawn from this ancient philosophy, of which all that can be said is that they are not cited from the Bible; they may be taken from the 'Wisdom of the East'. On the other hand, literatures, where we can trace their origins, usually commence with translations. Hence the most probable account of this book is that it belongs to the land wherein the scene is laid, and that it was rendered into Hebrew at a time when the literature of the Israelites was in need of models. It may well be the case too

that, as monotheism became dominant, and the hatred of foreign deities and doctrines became fierce, the work had to be subjected to expurgation and revision, whence it is now true, as Renan says, that the argument does not advance a step from beginning to end. This, however, need not always have been the case. It may be also that rhapsodies, doubtless of high poetical merit, yet having originally no connexion with the work, have been inserted. If this be so, endeavours to emend, rearrange, or interpret can have little value, for translations being irresponsible need have no meaning. And it is prudent to look for one only where there is some sound reason for supposing that it exists or existed.

It is of great interest that Job (xix. 23, 24) hopes his book will be written; and his idea of this is engraving in rock with a pen of iron and lead. The signatories of a deed in a Qatabanian inscription [1] are given the option of inscribing it on stone or wood; and the rocks of South Arabia still bear many a deed which its author wished to eternize; though this method did not always secure the result intended, as there are palimpsests among these inscriptions—stones wherefrom one writing has been erased to make room for another. It may be conjectured that the wish recorded was one which the author intended himself to fulfil; and some of the stones employed for the purpose may yet be discovered in the vast peninsula which is so imperfectly explored.

On one matter of great interest and difficulty the inscriptions appear hitherto to have thrown no light. This is the history of Arabic versification, which confronts us at the commencement of Islam as a finished product, more grammatical and literary than any analogous system, since it depends on rhyming letters, and vowels, long or short, and syllables of these two types. If the words *literary* and *grammatical* mean something to do with letters, i.e. signs that are painted or scratched, Arabic versification implies the one process or the other, whence it is remarkable that those Arabs who scratched so much on stone and wood appear to have dispensed with it, whereas those who are supposed to have been illiterate produced it so lavishly.[2] The question for us is whether Arabic versification goes back into pre-historic times or was an innovation which preceded Islam by perhaps

[1] Rhodokanakis, *Grundsatz*, p. 38.
[2] Hartmann, *die Arabische Frage*, p. 27, tries to account for this.

a generation or two. The Arabian archaeologists profess, indeed, to produce verses in Sabaean, but the genuineness of these is uncertain, though in some cases reasonably probable. Their genuineness would bring the system back to the Arabian literature which lies in the background of the Islamic reform. How far back it would be impossible for us to divine. It is, however, noticeable that some of the poetical technicalities of the Hebrew Bible seem to be relics of Arabic technicalities. 'To spell' in Arabic is *hajā*, also used for composing a satiric poem. In Hebrew the verb is used for an operation performed with the tongue, i. e. 'to articulate' (Psalm xxxv. 28), with the throat, or with the palate. It is also used for 'to meditate', i. e. *to spell out*, as 'In his law shall he meditate day and night', *yehgeh*. Some form of poetry is designated by the verbal noun *higgayon*, which in Arabic should mean 'satire'. It is reasonable to trace this couple to Arabia, and to suppose that the word 'spelling' applied to verse had something to do with rhyming letters or the like. The word for 'dirge', *qinah*, is without doubt connected with the North Arabic *qainah*, 'singing woman', whose chief duty was originally to chant dirges. The corresponding verb is found in both North and South Arabian, meaning in the former 'to forge' or 'fabricate', in the latter, it is said, 'to administer'[1] A *qinah* then means 'a work of art', reminding us of those verses which Horace thinks of as forged on an anvil. The derivation of the Hebrew *shir*, 'poetry', from the Arabic *shi'r*, seems less improbable to us since in a confessional tablet we find the verb written once with and once without the '*ayin*.[2]

Now it is well known that in the poetical passages of the Old Testament it is not possible to detect anything corresponding with the Arabic rhyme or metre, which indeed require art (*qinah*) with its gauges and accommodations. Poetical forms are found, but we do not know what necessitates their introduction. Attempts which have been made to reduce the Psalms to metre instead of lending an additional ornament merely render hideous that which is beautiful. There is, however, one feature which Arabic poetry has in common with the Hebrew form: in the majority of cases, in both, the verses consist of two parts, which stand to each other in some relation such as antithesis or repetition. Is it possible that here, too, we have the effect of wear and tear? The Hebrew poems offer an appearance analogous to what would be presented by translations of Arabic poems; the anti-

[1] Rhodokanakis, *Studien*, ii. 15.
[2] Tablet of RAS.

thesis or repetition would be preserved in the translation, but retention of the metre and the rhyme would be difficult, if not impossible. Yet such a word as *higgayon* seems to imply something to do with letters of the alphabet which the poems themselves fail to exhibit. The unmetrical character of Hebrew versification may then have its explanation in this: that what lay behind was the literary art of the older language; in the course of transference or translation into the newer idiom the features which were based on the grammar were lost, and only that which was independent thereof retained. It is worth observing that Solomon counted the verses which he composed,[1] which seems to imply some artifice; Josephus thinks that books of verse are meant, which is unlikely. Since the number given is not very different from that of the king's proverbs, the reference is likely to be to some natural unit, such as the verse (*bait*) is with the Arabic poets.

That the oldest Arabic verse which we possess is but a few decades, at most, earlier than the time of the Prophet is of course to be acknowledged; only had some part of Arabia at this time suddenly invented literary forms in the variety which Arabic metric displays, there ought to be some record of the fact; and there is none, though the archaeologists are not sparing of guesses about poetical origins. On the other hand, it has been emphasized by M. R. Bassett [2] that the tribal lay is an ephemeral performance which is not calculated to survive, however much the poet may credit himself with the power of conferring immortality. The lays of the Berbers in North Africa go no further back than the French conquest of Algeria, and even these would have been forgotten had not some French savants taken pains to preserve them! Where wars succeed wars incessantly, the interest in the older raids gives way to that of the newer; moreover, fresh alliances and fresh enmities produce a desire to cast oblivion on the older odes, which become dangerous anachronisms. The Medinese Jews are said to have tried to awaken the old dissensions between the tribes which Mohammed had succeeded in uniting by reciting some of these commemorative odes, belonging to quite recent times. The danger was perceived by the Moslems and the Jewish expedient for stirring up old passions was rendered abortive. The extraordinary persistence of the Arabic language renders it possible that its literary forms may likewise belong to remote antiquity and that these forms, or some of them, lie

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[1] 1 Kings iv. 12.
[2] *Mélanges*, p. 35.

behind the versification of the Old Testament, somewhat as the Arabic grammar lies behind the grammar of Hebrew.

If this be so it must also be admitted that by dropping its gauges and accommodations Hebrew poetry gained more than it lost. The inconvenience which attaches to all such artifices is that they are not compatible with complete seriousness. Here as elsewhere the rule applies that it is not possible to serve two masters with fidelity. Arabic verse is more elaborate in its artifice than any other; and in consequence there is no good Arabic poetry. There is not one ode among the tens of thousands we possess which has become classical or even popular in another language. In proportion to the grammatical and lexicographical learning which is involved, the efforts of the imagination and the reflective faculty have been weakened. Hence the Psalms and the prophecies have acquired an earnestness and a profundity which would have suffered seriously from the artificial restraints of counting syllables and searching for rhymes. Dispensing with the fascinations of rhythms and cadences they have to rely on brilliancy of imagery and depth of sentiment, such as appeal to maturer minds. But it would rather seem that this indicated a form of art which had got beyond mechanical attractions than one which had not yet attained to them.

A trace of this literary background seems also to be found in a word applied to prophets. Jer. xxix. 26, 'every man mad and making himself a prophet', would, if we were rendering the words as Arabic, be rendered 'every rhymester and prophetaster'; the North Arabian tradition makes such persons regularly deliver their oracles in the literary form called rhymed prose, which would be supposed to be the style of the Qur'an itself, were it not regarded as unorthodox to assert this. The original sense of the word is said to be 'the cooing of doves', and the transition of ideas would seem to be — cooing, rhyming, prophesying, raving; the transition in the last case is one which admits of easy illustration from other languages. It is not indeed likely that any of the pre-Islamic oracles in this style which historians preserve are genuine; but the tradition that they were delivered in this fashion is deserving of credit, and even orthodox Moslem writers call attention to the fact that the order of words in the Qur'an is evidently altered with a view to securing rhymes, which were therefore regarded by the nation as characteristic of the oracular style. Though the employment of this style was discouraged by the Prophet, it seems to have been too popular to be discarded;

it was retained for various forms of solemn utterance, for sermons, public speeches, and presently for official correspondence; and became the vehicle for the nearest approach to the drama which the Arabic genius invented. The prophetic style of the Old Testament might seem to have left this artifice behind it as the poetic style left behind it the old Arabic versification. The matter which the prophets had to communicate was too weighty to have the attention diverted by such trifles. Only in this word which is coupled with prophet or prophetaster a trace was left of a time wherein the oracles, like those of the Hellenic shrines, had to be delivered in the company of some form of artifice, though it did not escape attention that the poetry of these oracles was unworthy of the god who was thought to inspire all poetry.

In the Old Testament we can trace at any rate faintly the process whereby the Arabs came to be known to the Israelites, and how ultimately their name came to be associated with the country lying to the south-east of Palestine, until in the time of Josephus Arabia means a state with Petra for capital sometimes stretching northwards as far as Damascus, and extending indefinitely to the south. In the account of the sources of king Solomon's wealth (1 Kings x. 15) we have the enigmatic statement that in addition to his 666 talents from other sources he had *the men of the Tarim and the traffic of the merchants and all the kings of the 'Ereb and the satraps of the country*. The Chronicler (2 Chron. ix. 13[14]) has some difficulty with the syntax of the passage and substitutes for the '*Ereb* the word '*Arab*, meaning Arabia. His idea is that the kings of that region brought Solomon gold and silver; and the author of Ps. lxxii. 10 is perhaps interpreting the words in a somewhat different way when he speaks of the kings of Seba and Sheba bringing *eshkar*, a word used by Ezekiel (xxvii. 15) in some connexion with commerce and indeed that of Arab tribes, though here too the exact sense has to be guessed. It makes against the interpretation of the Chronicler, though it by no means brings light, that Jeremiah knows of the '*Ereb* as distinct from the '*Arab* or Arabia; they figure side by side in the list of the states whose doom it is his business to proclaim (xxv. 20 and 24). Indeed, the '*Ereb* receives double mention; according to v. 24 its kings dwell in the desert, which we should have thought more likely to be the case with the '*Arab*, since that word is still associated specially with Bedouins, and the author of 2 Maccabees makes Arabs and

Nomads synonymous (xii. 10). It is quite clear that the Prophet follows no geographical order in his list of states, so that we can learn nothing about their location from this passage. 'Ereb (v. 20) is followed by 'Us; next come the cities of Philistia; then Edom, etc., then Tyre, etc.; then Dedan, Taima, and Buz, and 'those who have the corners of their hair cropped'; then the kings of 'Arab and 'Ereb. The mission of Jaussen and Savignac has taught us the name of a king of Dedan; an inscription [1] mentions a cave of Kabiril, son of Matail, king of Dedan, but the following words are obscure. Some other names of Dedanites are found in their collection. These archaeologists have, as has been seen, made it probable that Dedan was the ancient name for El-'Ula, where the text was found.[2] There seems to be no plausible mode of accounting for the double mention of 'Ereb, or the separation of 'Us from Buz, which are elsewhere juxtaposed; and emendation, i.e. deliberate falsification of the evidence, cannot help us.

The different versions of the Books of Kings offer what are obviously conjectures about the meaning of the text cited and the nature of the different sources of revenue indicated. In an inscription in the Minaean dialect published by Glaser,[3] a god is thanked in reference to what seems to have been a trading expedition to Gazah among other places; the word here used for 'trading' [4] has been plausibly identified with that used for 'merchants' in the passage of Kings; and there is another inscription, of great interest for its geography, which alludes to similar proceedings. It seems probable then that the source of revenue to which the historian refers is import duties, levied on goods brought into the country whether for sale there or for transmission to some other land. The kings of' the 'Ereb may, then, have been rightly interpreted as the potentates who exported the wares of Arabia and in Solomon's time could with safety use the land route. When Jeremiah speaks of them as dwelling in the wilderness, that word may be a general designation for the peninsula of which so large a portion is arid and uncultivated. It is usual to suppose that 'Ereb in this context means 'the mixed population', like Pamphylia; but one fancies

[1] P. 470, no. 138.
[2] Their suggestion that there were several places named Dedan appears to be gratuitous.
[3] *Die Abessinier in Arabien*, p. 75. He numbers it 1083.
[4] רתכל, Heb. רכלים.

that to those who spoke Hebrew the word must have naturally suggested *evening*, i.e. the west: called in North Arabic *gharb*, whereas in the dialect of the inscriptions the Hebrew form is used.

When a country is spoken of as *the West*, we cannot be sure what is meant unless we know the point of view of those who originally thus designated it. Books are written in Egypt in these days on *The Eastern Question*, where the countries involved are by no means to the east of Egypt. Hence the 'kings of the Evening' in the language of the history of Solomon need not necessarily mean to the west of Palestine.

What appears from these passages is that if the Books of Kings embody a contemporary chronicle, *the kings of the 'Ereb* served at this time as a vague designation for Arabian potentates; whereas '*Arab* in a sense somewhat similar to that wherein later Jews employed the term came into Israelitish ken about the same time as it is first found in cuneiform inscriptions; and that when the Chronicles were composed the two were identified, though they were at first distinct. What the author of the Kings means by 'local satraps' is a further puzzle, which does not here concern us. Neither have we to explain the phrases *anshe hattarim* or *eshkar*. The latter indeed resembles a type of Arabic plural which is found in all the dialects; and these dialects are rich in names for taxes. There are inscriptions containing whole lists of imposts whereof one or two at most can as yet be made out with the help of the literary languages.[1] Probably there is scarcely a region of human activity wherein euphemism is more constantly employed than taxation. In English we have *duties* and *customs*, endearing terms which scarcely veil a disagreeable fact; and the French *octroi*, which is said to mean 'authorization', serves no better to gild the pill.

It is in the time of Nehemiah that the '*Arab* so to speak become sharply focussed in Israelitish eyes. The name of one of these, גשם, or in its Nabataean orthography עשמו, figures as that of a tribe in inscriptions. This person and his tribe are treated by Nehemiah as national enemies like the Ammonites and Moabites, and they are probably thought of as dwelling in the same region as is termed Arabia by Josephus. The relations of these Arabs to the Jews in the period whereon that historian

[1] Rhodokanakis, *Der Grundsatz der Öffentlichkeit*, p. 16. *Katabanische Texte*, p. 57.

is our authority are not very different from what they were in Nehemiah's time.

The states of the interior of Arabia have rarely had much to do with the outside world; world-conquerors have indeed at times made expeditions into their country, sometimes attended with ephemeral success but as often resulting in complete failure. The time at which the Israelitish state attained sufficient importance to have concerns with others than its immediate neighbours was that brief period when the tribes were united under the sway of a single monarch; a time known as yet only from Israelitish records, which cannot be checked by other sources. To this period the Bible assigns the visit of the Queen of Saba to King Solomon. We hear of Arabian queens, if not at this time, still about 250 years later, when Sargon received tribute from the Queen Shamsi and Ita'amara the Sabaean.[1] And the recently discovered realm of Lihyan is shown by the finds of Jaussen and Savignac to have had a queen among its rulers.[2] Now emphasis has been laid on the fact that in Sargon's statement the man of Saba is not designated as king; and indeed a long period seems to have elapsed before kings of Saba figure in inscriptions; of two chronological schemes, one places the first of these 750 B. C., the other about 500 B.C.[3] The Biblical queen is evidently a person of importance, as the gifts which she brings are of unique value, and such as point to South Arabia. The time when a ruler of Saba could afford such luxuries would seem to have been later by many centuries; and, indeed, Josephus does not think Saba good enough and prefers to make the lady a queen of Egypt and Ethiopia.

It has, indeed, been suggested that the name Saba may have been substituted for that of some older state by the historian, and the fact that we have no other mention of queens of Saba need not be regarded as impugning the story, for queens have a tendency to assume control where we should least expect them to do so; the Jews themselves were at one period of the Hasmonaean dynasty subject to a queen Alexandra; and the Moslems of India and Egypt have at times submitted to women rulers. What is in any case of great interest is that the story of the Queen of Saba belongs to a later period than that of Job, where the Sabaeans are still raiders and appear to be housed in North Arabia. In one of the earlier inscriptions the Sabaeans are still both located and

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[1] See also *Epigr. Denk.* xxv. 5, and MVAG. 1898, p. 23.
[2] Jaussen, p. 391.
[3] See Weber in MVAG. vi. 30 foll.

occupied in this way;[1] at a later period they have removed to the South and then their kings might well be in a position to make presents in the Queen of Saba's style. To a yet later period belongs the notice in the book of Joel (iv. 8), wherein it is foretold that the Phoenicians would be sold by Jewish slave-dealers 'to the Sabaeans unto a distant nation'. This would imply from the nature of the prepositions that the Sabaean dealers would come to the Jewish market to purchase them and bring them home.[2]

The Queen of Saba, according to the First Book of Kings, comes to Jerusalem to test the king's wisdom rather than on a diplomatic mission.[3] Her name is not stated, though, as has been seen, this author records the names of' several Eastern sages, who are not otherwise known to fame. Neither does he specify any of this royal visitor's conundrums. It is to be feared that the epigraphy of South Arabia does little to elucidate this narrative, though as has been seen it introduces a slight difficulty into the chronology. On the other hand, the literature of North Arabia gives copious illustration of the sort of' enigmas which the queen would be likely to propound. Women there sometimes figure as the equals of men in these matters. The conversation of Solomon and the Queen of Saba is likely to have resembled that between the wise woman Tabaqah and Shann in the commentary on the proverb which has immortalized their names.[4] Shann sees a corpse carried to the grave and asks whether it is alive or dead. The unwise think him a fool; the wise woman Tabaqah knows that he means—has the dead man surviving issue or not? A whole Maqamah of Hariri exhibits wisdom of this sort; a series of legal questions is asked in each one of which a word is used in some rare sense; the wise man guesses the meaning and gives the correct reply to the conundrum. Sometimes the wisdom means acquaintance with the science of augury; a man narrates how he was walking in Qadi Street in Baghdad in the year 945 to visit a judge who was reported to be ill. He met three Bedouins: one of them hearing a raven croaking over the house said, 'This tells me that the judge is about to die.' The second said, 'Yes, but after three days.' The third said, 'True, and he will be buried in his house.' All this they had learned from the

[1] Hommel, *Südarabische Chrestomathie*, p. 103.
[2] Hartmann, *Arabische Frage*, p. 421.
[3] As Glaser assumes in his fanciful account of this affair.
[4] Hariri, ed. de Sacy, p. 460.

bird and it all turned out as they said.[1] In other cases the wisdom is more after the style with which the modern detective story has rendered us familiar.

Of the four best known South Arabian kingdoms, Saba, Main, Hadramaut, and Qataban, the first three have been recognized in the Old Testament. In the Chronicles (2 Chron. xxvi. 7) the Main, or as the Greeks called them Minaeans, figure among the enemies against whom King Uzziah fought with success; and in the days of Hezekiah, according to the same authority (1 Chron. iv. 41) they were defeated by the Simeonites who seized their settlements in South Palestine. Glaser and his followers think of these Minaeans as relics of a great Arabian empire which they suppose to have preceded the hegemony of Saba; while it has been suggested that they might be colonies, comparable to those of the Jews at a later time in Arabia. The inscriptions of al-'Ula make it clear that the Minaean kingdom, whose capital was Karna, at one time extended far into North Arabia, since some of these texts mention Minaean kings and even date by their reigns. The group of Minaean texts brought from this region by Jaussen and Savignac is of extraordinary interest, though the interpretation is as yet very uncertain; we are not, however, at liberty to infer more from them than they contain. The names *Ma'an* and *Ma'in* are natural names for places, signifying respectively 'Signal',[2] and 'Spring water',[3] whence numerous tribes may have had names derived from such places independently, and the identification of the M'unim of the Chronicles with the Minaeans of Arabia is uncertain. Further, where the Chronicles depart from the older historical books, their evidence is suspect; the influence of Greece here and there displays itself. If then the tribe mentioned in this work be intended for the Minaeans of the monuments and of the Greek geographers, it is likely that the mention of them is due to the growth of knowledge which followed the rise of the Greek Empire, whose founder desired to include the Arabian peninsula therein, and organized some sort of exploration which resulted in the accurate statements of the Greek geographers, whose confirmation by the recently discovered inscriptions has been justly admired not without wonder.

In the same work—the Chronicles—we find the only definite interference of the South Arabians in Israelitish affairs. It asserts

[1] *Nishwar*, p. 265.
[2] Ibn al-Rumi, i. 208 معان خيرين للرواد .
[3] Hariri, ed. de Sacy, p. 157.

(2 Chron. xxi. 16) that the kingdom of Judah was attacked in the days of Jehoram by the Arabs who dwell by the side of Kush, and that their raid was most effective; for they killed all the king's sons except the youngest, Ahaziah, who succeeded to the throne. Jehoram was thereby punished for having put to death all his brothers, a somewhat drastic expedient for the prevention of wars of succession, for which the Ottomans afterwards became renowned. The Arabs who dwell by the side of Kush are evidently those of South Arabia, where the coast approaches that of Abyssinia, whence at the Bab al-Mandeb it is separated by a channel only fifteen miles broad, which, if we may believe an Ethiopic chronicle, was once spanned by a chain to prevent the approach of hostile vessels. This notice of the Chronicles is copied by Josephus, who does not attempt to explain it; we should imagine that a raid from South Arabia would have been conducted from the sea, as it is clear that according to the Chronicler the Arabs did not stay, but went off with their plunder. They are coupled with the Philistines, probably to indicate that this nation which occupied the coast made no resistance to the invaders, but rather co-operated with them in their attack on the Jewish kingdom.

The narrative conflicts with that of the Kings in the occasion of the death of the brothers of Ahaziah, who according to the older authority were put to death by Jehu. If the older history is to be trusted then they were not put to death by the South Arabians; nor till after their father Jehoram's death. This fact conflicted with the theory of the Chronicler that this massacre was a punishment inflicted on Jehoram for a similar outrage which he had committed; if, therefore, it had to take place in the life-time of Jehoram, Jehu could not be made responsible for it. The Arabs who dwell by Kush are an expedient for effecting this example of poetic justice. Perhaps, too, there is an etymological argument based on the name Ahaziah, for which the Chronicler also uses Jehoahaz. The person 'caught by Yaho' must have been rescued from a massacre, whereas according to the Kings, Ahaziah had been slain before his brethren. The question was who was responsible for the massacre. The analogy of the case of Job's servants would suggest that the culprits were the nation called Saba, whose designation itself suggests captivity. Probably the elder sons were in the king's camp, whereas Ahaziah, the youngest, was at home in the palace. This seems to be the process of reasoning whereby

the South Arabians were discovered to have raided Judah in the time of Jehoram.

An earlier monument of the interest of Israel in Arabia is to be found in the genealogical tables of Genesis, which have occupied the attention of numerous archaeologists and experts, without the attainment of any very satisfactory result. The tables which deal with this matter are those of the Yoqtanids, and the sons of Ishmael, and those of Keturah. Some of the names admit of easy identification; some, such as Nebaioth, have been found in cuneiform inscriptions, and thus brought into secular geography, though their location is not very certain. The mention of Safar (Gen. x. 30), doubtless to be identified with Pliny's Sappharis, the Tafar of some Greek writers and the Dhafar of the Arabs and the modern maps, as well as that of Hadramaut, shows that somehow one of the genealogists had some sort of acquaintance with the whole peninsula. Pliny observes with justice that even in Arabia names change with great rapidity, whence we could not expect to be able to identify all that appear in the tables unless we happened to possess a chronicle, or still better, a chart of Arabia contemporaneous with, or itself the source of, the tables; and since geographical divisions correspond to a very small extent only with real family-trees, those who reduce geography to pedigrees have to introduce imaginary links. Thus Peleg and Yoqtan or Yeqtan, sons of Eber, appear to owe their existence to the exigencies of genealogy. The former is derived by the Biblical writer from a root meaning to separate, but seems to be the Aramaic for 'half'; while Yeqtan may mean 'the Lesser', i.e. the less important branch of the family. The question, however, of the motives which dictated the pedigrees would not, if it could be solved, throw much light on the reasons for their introduction and the causes which determined the inclusion of such a few names out of so many.

The well-known account of the commerce of Tyre which occupies the twenty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel, suggests the mode whereby the Israelites came to hear of these out-of-the-way persons and places. Goods were imported thence by the Tyrians from whose market they were distributed over the rest of Syria.[1] The Prophet, indeed, only mentions the goods which Israel and Judah brought to the Tyrian market (v. 17), and this, as is admitted, contains some unintelligible words. It is natural that the goods obtained in exchange should have some account of

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[1] See W. H. Schoff, *The Ship Tyre*, N.Y., 1920.

their origin attached to them, just as in our time the retail dealer learns the names of various places as the source of the articles wherein he deals, though he may have no accurate notion of their geography. 'Arab' in this list is represented as dealing in live stock; this is still the stock-in-trade of the Bedouins, and it is noteworthy that this name does not figure in the tables of Genesis, which otherwise illustrate the prophecy exceedingly well. The products which Ezekiel declares to have been imported by Tyre from Saba, Dedan, Uzal (= San'a in Yemen), and other Arabian localities are such as are known to have been procurable at those places. But if the Israelites knew of these places as the sources of goods furnished by the Tyrians, it is likely that the genealogies are at least to some extent furnished from the Tyrian standpoint. The 'other side' or Eber need not, as applied to the smaller branch of the family, have borne the same sense as in its application to the larger half. From the Tyrian point of view it might perhaps mean the other side of the Sinaitic peninsula. When the Israelites came across these geographical names from more than one source, different groupings would be likely to arise, whence the same name is given in more than one pedigree.

This then appears to be the natural account of the introduction of the South Arabian names, and to explain the vagueness and the variations of the lists. That even among the thirteen names which represent the Arabian peninsula there should be some of which we do not hear elsewhere is not perhaps very surprising. Till some decades of years ago the Hittites were nearly as obscure as Abimael. In the peninsula as the inscriptions portray it there was constant unrest, shifting of centres of importance and cropping up of new names with disappearance of the old.

It is an exaggeration to speak of the tables as is sometimes done as displaying accurate knowledge of South Arabian affairs. The statements of the Greeks indeed, as has been seen, display startling accuracy; the kingdoms which they mention have become familiar from the inscriptions, and the capitals which the inscriptions assign those kingdoms are the same as the Greeks name. These, however, are the result of scientific inquiry, whereas the Old Testament pedigrees are likely to have arisen from the casual connexion of a tribal or local name with some article of commerce chiefly imported through Tyre.

If the ecclesiastical historian Philostorgius be right in his assertion that the Sabaeans circumcised on the eighth day, and

if that was an ancient practice with them—and both these are hypotheses [1]—this would account for the second derivation of Saba from Abraham and Qeturah; since Ishmael was accounted for by the time in Abraham's life wherein the ordinance was revealed, Saba would have to come later; he could not be Sara's descendant, whence Abraham must have had a later wife.

As has been seen in the time of Nehemiah, the Jews began to regard the Arabs, i.e. their neighbours on the south-east, as their natural enemies, and when the story of Judaea is reopened after long silence in the stirring times of the Maccabaean rising, there is an Arab kingdom, which plays an important part in the fortunes of the turbulent state of South Palestine. Of this kingdom we possess numerous coins and inscriptions; they are, however, in an Aramaic dialect, mixed with Arabic words and expressions, and the names of the kings are Arabic. Since Josephus, who is our sole authority for much of this period, must have known the distinction between Arabs and Aramaeans, or as they call themselves, Nabataeans, and as a man of affairs is likely to have come in contact with persons belonging to the Nabataean kingdom, we are practically compelled to follow his theory that they were Arabs; yet the explanation that the language employed in their monuments was the official, not the national language, does not seem quite satisfactory, and the later Arabs think of the Nabataeans as strangers, not as of their own race. Specimens of their language and pronunciation are occasionally given, and these are clearly barbarous;[2] yet it may be the case that during the centuries which elapsed since the fall of their kingdom they had come on evil days and become infused with barbarous elements. In the story of Josephus they furnish many a thrilling episode; at one time Herod the Great was made their *prostates*, or protector; his commission to fight them was what saved him from following the fortunes of Antony in the campaign which ended with the disaster of Actium; he would have been made their king by Augustus had not the long series of his domestic troubles rendered the emperor doubtful of his competence. In the final struggle of Jerusalem they are on the Roman side, and disgust

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[1] Epiphanius, *Haer*. I. xxx., § 33, says that the Saracens and Himyar (Homeritae) practise the rite, without naming the day.

[2] Tabari, iii. 2125, 14 كرميته , said to mean 'red-eyed'; *Nishwar*, p.218. In the comm. on Labid, p. 112, اقرأ is said to be Nabataean for 'palace'. In *Islah, al-Mantiq* 168 the Nabataean language is an example of something unintelligible. The commentator on 'Abid b. Abras (Lyall, 32, 5) identifies Nabataeans with Jews.

the Roman commander by their brutality. The love which their kings had professed for Hellenism had not resulted in their being civilized. There is no need on this occasion to enter further into their relations with the Jewish community. When next we find Jews in connexion with Arabs, the former are colonists in the Peninsula, perhaps by some *jus postliminii* returning to the land whence their forefathers had issued in the long-forgotten past.

LECTURE III

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CENTURIES

THE Arabs were not unfamiliar to the Jews of the period covered by the Oral Tradition of the latter, and a considerable number of allusions to them have been collected from the works which embody it.[1] The country, or some part of it, is called by its Graeco-Latin name Arabia, with a recollection of the Hebrew form in the ע with which its name commences. The inhabitants are at times called after the tribe Tay, as they were by the Syrian Christians, and into this appellation too a ע which has no right there has been introduced, possibly to bring the name into connexion with a root which means 'to go astray'. Sometimes they are called Ishmaelites in accordance with the Biblical genealogy. In one passage, which is not free from irony, they are preferred as masters to all other nations;[2] but this compliment is exceptional. They are enumerated among four objects whose creation was regretted by the Almighty;[3] a captor is naturally thought of as an Arab,[4] which implies that the Jews frequently on their travels fell into the hands of Bedouin raiders. They are charged with worshipping the dust of their feet:[5] a practice which cannot be illustrated from the inscriptions, but which at any rate reminds one of the practice followed by the Spanish Caliph al-Mansur, who, whenever he reached a halting-place in his expeditions used to shake off carefully the dust of his clothes, and preserve it in a casket made for the purpose.[6] Other practices of ancient days survived in warlike expeditions, and this may have been one of them. The Jewish tradition agrees with Moslem writers in the most notable feature of the Arab character,[7] i. e. the development of one particular passion.

The allusions which have been collected exhibit the same sort of vagueness as is found in analogous cases in the works of classical writers who make no speciality of geography. There is rarely any distinct mention of a tribe or a place; possibly the

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[1] See S. Krauss in ZDMG. lxx. 321 foll.
[2] *B. Sabbath*, 11 a.
[3] *Succah*, 52 b.
[4] *Ketuboth*, 36 b.
[5] *Baba Metsia*, 86 b.
[6] Dozy, *Spanish. Islam*, p. 522. His reference to the Qur'an is fictitious.
[7] *Kiddushin*, 49 b. Abu Hayyan in his *Imta*' says much the same.

Arabs were not generally supposed to have towns or cities, being nomads, and it is certain that before Islam none of their seats acquired any fame outside Arabia. One Simeon of Taima is mentioned as an authority;[1] he was a contemporary of R. Akiba, and lived in Yabneh.[2] Taima is mentioned as a Jewish centre by the poet Shammam, who lived under the first three Caliphs: he compares the traces of a ruined dwelling with the Hebrew writing of a doctor (habr) of Taima.[3]

When the Rabbis of this period produce Arabic words, they are sometimes capable of identification,[4] but more often not, possibly because they belong to dialects not otherwise preserved. Of the existence of either Jewish colonies in the Hijaz or of a Jewish kingdom in South Arabia this oral tradition has no record. Yet the latter, if true, might seem to be a fact of primary importance in Jewish history.

It is probable that the Arabs with whom the Jews in the early Christian centuries came in contact were those who had come under Roman and Parthian—afterwards Persian—rule; and some of these seem to have come to the seats where Jewish learning was perpetuated. There is a case wherein certain 'Arabs' appeal to Rabbis at one of these universities for a decision in a matter connected with real property.[5]

In addition to those Arabic words which the Jewish tradition preserves, but which like its Greek are not quite easy to identify, it may be observed that these works, including the Mishnah, contain not a few Arabisms, the source of which it would be interesting to trace. It does not surprise us to find Arabic words used for 'a she-camel with her bridle', 'a pack-saddle', 'a man with an amputated foot'; for 'caravan';[6] for 'mare';[7] 'for bandit';[8] but the reason in some other cases is more obscure, and though in the case of some of these expressions we know their date sufficiently well to be able to draw from their usage certain chronological inferences, in some others the possibility of coincidence cannot be disregarded. So far as these words are pre-Islamic it is likely that they were learned through association with members of the Nabataean state, whose relations with the Jews we have seen. The formula for a bill of divorce, which gives two Aramaic and one Arabic synonym for this notion, is

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[1] *Zebachim*, 32 b.
[2] *Sanhedrin*, 17 a.
[3] Ed. Shanqiti, p. 26.
[4] e.g. מטרקא for 'a whip', Yoma 23 a.
[5] *B. Bathra*, 167 b.
[6] שירא = سيّارة *Erubin*, i, § 8.
[7] רמך = رمكة *Kelain*, viii.
[8] חרמי = حرامى *Nedarim*, iii, § 4.

reminiscent of the dialect of this community.[1] On the whole, however, it is surprising how rarely the rich language of the Mishnah and its copious technicalities of agriculture and commerce can be satisfactorily illustrated from Arabic.

Although there seems room for fresh study of this literature for the purpose of estimating the mutual relations of the Jews and the Arabs during the lengthy period which it covers, it is probable that the results for actual history would be meagre. Whoever has to deal with oral tradition is aware of the pitfalls which it offers; certain catchwords remain in the memory of' the successive transmitters, but little else is accurately retained; one who traces a tradition either in the 'six books' of the Arabs or in the different compilations of the Jews has no difficulty in illustrating this.

For Jewish settlements in Arabia our authorities are then Christian and Moslem writers. From both these sources we learn that Jewish elements were to be found in the north and the south of the Peninsula. For the period which these statements cover South Arabian epigraphy is very copious; and since some of the inscriptions are dated by an era which, it has been ascertained, synchronizes with 115 B. C., we are in a fairly favourable position for tracing the events of the southern regions. If we have no continuous chronicles, we have at least some dated fragments. The materials furnished by these documents for the question of the Jews in South Arabia will be considered presently. It will be seen that they contain nothing whence an inquiry could be started. At best they may throw some side-lights on results obtained from other sources. We may begin then with the information which the Moslems profess to furnish.

The account given by the chief Moslem archaeologist [2] does little more than illustrate the methods of these students. Moses, he tells us, sent an army against the Amalekites, then established at Yathrib in North Arabia, with orders to slay them all; the army carried out these instructions, but spared one lad whose beauty attracted them, and whom they determined to bring to Moses; who was to decide his fate himself. When they returned to Syria whence Moses had dispatched them, the legislator was already dead. His successor upbraided them for disobedience, and declared that they must not remain in Syria. They, remembering that the country whose inhabitants they had exterminated

[1] *Gittin*, 85 b. שבקין ונט פטורין (Aramaic) תירוכין ואנת (Arabic)ספר .
[2] *Aghani*, ed. 1, xix. 94.

was fertile, decided to return thither, and after some experiments found suitable settlements, where they throve and acquired wealth. This was the first settlement; afterwards when the Romans expelled the Jews from Syria, two other tribes, the Nadir and Quraizah, decided to join their brethren in North Arabia. They remained in undisturbed possession till the bursting of the dam of Marib, which led to an emigration from South Arabia in all directions. The pagan tribes Aus and Khazraj decided to settle in Yathrib, and at the commencement of Islam we find three Jewish tribes settled there with the two Arab tribes who have been named.

That nothing deserving the name of history or even tradition can be got from this conglomerate is evident; it contains a vague reminiscence of the story of Saul and Agag, and ascribes to Moses some of the depraved tastes which were often found in Moslem princes. Otherwise it is just noticeable for the suggestion that the two tribes which with a third meet us in the biography of the Prophet were not the original settlers, but later colonists who had arrived within historic times.

The name Yathrib is found in two Minaean inscriptions, from which this much is clear, that it was not a Jewish but a pagan settlement at some time B.C., though of course for all we know there may have been Jews there; and the story which connects the later settlement with the Roman re-conquest of Judaea appears to owe its origin to a place-name, Tamr al-Rum, 'the Palms of the Romans ', which was said to have marked the limits of the Roman pursuit. How much the archaeologist knew about the Jews appears from a story of his, how after a massacre the Jews of Yathrib placed an image or portrait of their chief enemy in their churches and synagogues, and used to curse it; we cannot therefore attach any importance to his statements, and the list of eleven tribes which he produces is likely to be pure fiction. Only one of the eleven has a name which has any appearance of being Jewish; that is the Banu Zaghura, whose ancestor may be identified so far as his appellation is concerned with זעורא, which appears in the Jewish tradition frequently. The Moslem tradition knew of Jews who inhabited Medinah in the Prophet's time; and it preserved the names of three tribes resident there, each of whom in turn incurred the Prophet's hostility. Different suggestions of their origin brought them into connexion with Moses and the Romans. These were harmonized by the supposition of two immigrations. Doubtless

those who survived into the time of the Prophet were the descendants of the later immigrants. In order to supply names for the earlier immigrants recourse was had to the imagination.

The members of the Jewish communities thus settled seem also to have had Arabic names; those whom the Prophet's biography mentions, whether as opponents or adherents, ordinarily[1] bear such designations. Reference is occasionally made to their dialect as differing in some ways from that used by their neighbours. From the Qur'an we seem to learn that they possessed copies of the Law, had Rabbis whom they were disposed to overrate, and observed the Sabbath with certain food-tabus. Only neither the tribes nor the individual members observed that respect for the Old Testament which the race usually displays in naming children after the prophets and saints whose exploits it records. When the biographer introduces a whole number of Medinese Jews arguing with the Prophet about the transference of the direction of prayer from Jerusalem to Meccah, or in the affair of the Banu Nadir, whose fate marked the second stage in development of hostility between Judaism and Islam, their appellations are either identical with those in use among the Arabs, or, if they are unusual, have nothing Israelitish about them.

Possibly the explanation of this is that the tradition preserved few actual names of Jews who had taken part in these disputes, and indeed these tribes clearly furnished no persons of distinction, no antagonists in any way a match for the Prophet and his lieutenants, no champions whose exploits would cause their names to be remembered. One recollects the name of a person who has dealt a wound, but not that of one who has administered a pinprick. Still the biographer had to provide names, and he may not have taken the trouble to provide such as were likely. Since this biographer is credited with having engaged versifiers to compose contemporary poems, the suggested exploit was not beyond his capacity. If, however, there is anything historical in the names of the tribes and the individuals belonging to them, it should probably be inferred that the Jews of Medinah were Arabs who had embraced Judaism.

In favour of this view a rather interesting argument was produced by H. Winckler.[2] Had the Arabian Jews been colonists, he observes, they would not have sunk from their

[1] Exceptions are 'Uzair, Finhas (Phineas), and Ashya' (Isaiah); Ibn Ishaq, 352.
[2] MVAG. vi. 222.

higher civilization to the primitive tribal organization in which they appear in the Prophet's biography. He supposes then that Judaism was spread by propagandists in Arabia as doubtless was the case with Christianity. This would account for the tribes, while changing their religion, maintaining their habits and ways of life. Against this it may be noticed that their civilization seems to have been somewhat higher than that of their neighbours; their cultivation of the soil was somewhat more scientific, and they appear to have themselves disliked fighting, but to have been forced into their neighbours' quarrels. Towards Mohammed himself after they had made his personal acquaintance their attitude seems to have been similar to that of the eminent traveller, H. M. Doughty, when he had familiarized himself with Islam in its home. He might have been prepared to call Socrates a prophet of God, but nothing would induce him to bestow that title on the founder of Islam. Whether this implies a higher or a lower degree of intelligence than that of the other Arabs must be left to the individual judgement to decide.

That Judaism was not only known in Arabia, but at one time held sway there as a State religion, seems to be agreed by Christian and Moslem writers. Professor Hartmann even knows the reasons which led the Himyari kings to adopt Judaism.[1] The despotism at which these kings aimed could not dispense with the support of a strong party in the country. The old religion and its priesthood were hostile. The adherents of Christianity were untrustworthy. Hence the kings turned to the Jews, who might enable them to monopolize the finance. They even went so far as to embrace Judaism, in order thereby to secure the fidelity of these financial magnates.

This may have been so, though such a measure exhibits a subordination of all other considerations to money-making such as political history cannot easily parallel. But the fact is that the supposed Judaism of the Himyari kings seems to elude the inquirer when he endeavours to lay hold on it. For the presence and influence of Jews is a very different thing from their making proselytes of the king and court.

The presence of Jews at the Himyari capital is indeed attested by the ecclesiastical historian Philostorgius (about A.D. 425),[2] who asserts, as has been seen, that the Sabaeans, in his time called Himyar, practised the Abrahamic rite on the eighth day, but sacrificed to the sun, moon, and local deities. A number of Jews

[1] *Die Arabische Frage*, p. 45.
[2] iii. 5.

were mixed up with them, who offered opposition to the mission of one Theophilus who was sent by the Emperor Constantius (349-361) to convert them and succeeded in founding three churches, of which one was at Dhafar and another in Aden. According to this the Himyar were at this time pagans, though there were Jewish settlers among them.

The next ecclesiastical historian, Theodorus Lector, at the beginning of the sixth century,[1] records as follows: Himyar, whose name he transliterates far more correctly than the other Greek writers as Himmirenoi, had originally been Jews, having been converted by the Queen of Saba; they had afterwards become pagan again, but were converted to Christianity in the time of Anastasius (491-518). This well-informed writer is not apparently aware of the continued existence of Jews in this region in his time. Neither of them knows of Jewish kings, though so rare a phenomenon ought to have reached their ears.

For the statement that there was a *series* of Jewish kings we must then go to Moslem writers; and their account of this matter is by no means on the lines of Professor Hartmann. They tell us that a certain king, Abu Karib of Himyar, designed the destruction of both Meccah and Yathrib,[2] but was deterred by Jewish doctors, who assured him that these places were destined to play a great part in the career of the Arabian Prophet; and some verses composed by a Jewish poet on this occasion are cited. The king, they say, was converted to Judaism by the efforts of these Rabbis. Now this Abu Karib is to be identified with a king Abu Karib As'ad, whose son, Sharahbil Ya'fur, records in an inscription published by Glaser how in the year A.D. 450 he repaired the mound of Marib. He was certainly a monotheist; but the name which he uses for the Deity, *ba'al samayin wa-ar-din*, Baal of heaven and earth, seems to indicate a monotheism which had developed out of paganism rather than out of Judaism, since the application of the name *Baal* to the Divine Being ran counter to Jewish sentiment. Further it is noticeable that this king's name shows no difference from those of his pagan predecessors, neither does that of his father, whom the tradition makes a convert to Judaism. We should expect that with conversion some Hebraic name would have been taken if not by the father himself, still by the son; thus the Christian inscription which comes later has for its author an Abrahah, clearly a variety of

[1] Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, lxxxv, p. 211.
[2] *Aghani*, ed. 1, xiii. 119.

the name Abraham. The Moslem tradition is confirmed then to the extent that this dynasty was monotheistic; but the identification of monotheism with Judaism is not necessarily sound, and however admirable we may find the conduct of the Rabbis in saving Meccah and Medinah for the future Prophet, such a story scarcely claims credence. Probably we should infer that the legend retained the fact that the king Abu Karib discarded paganism for monotheism; interpreting this as Judaism, it had to explain how he came to be converted. Since there were Jews settled in Yathrib it brought him to that city; and since Yathrib was miraculously saved from his wrath, it was only proper that Meccah should enjoy a similar privilege.

To inquire into the reasons of so obscure an event as the conversion of this king to a system which appears to have been neither Christianity nor Judaism may not seem a profitable expenditure of ingenuity; we shall probably be right in regarding it as in some measure due to Christian propaganda, which, as appearing to involve acceptance of Byzantine suzerainty, may well have been thought to endanger the independence of the Arab state. The feebleness of the resistance made by the indigenous paganism at a later time to Islam has justly excited the surprise of historians; if, therefore, there was a prospect of Christianity spreading, the adoption of some system which would satisfy intellectual requirements without involving political subordination may have seemed a wise measure. That the Jews in Arabia at this time were sufficient in numbers, importance, or wealth, to provide the reasons suggested by Hartmann for the adoption of their system is unlikely; but that they were utilized for the refutation of Christian propaganda is likely enough, and, indeed, is illustrated by the anecdotes which survive from these times.

Winckler discovered an Ethiopic hagiography which does not confirm the theory that this dynasty was Jewish, but assumes the presence of Jews in the kingdom, who, as usual, oppose the Christian missionaries.[1] A saint named Azqir, according to this, made converts in Najran; he was summoned to Dhafar by the indignant king, and there Azqir had to dispute with a Jew. After the debate Azqir was sent back to Najran in disgrace, and there the Jews tried to kill him in various ways, unsuccessfully; finally, at his own request, a Christian lent his sword to the executioner and this instrument was effective in putting an end

[1] AOF. i. 332.

to the saint's life—a curious inversion of the Greek idea that he who has inflicted the wound will also do the healing.

It is evident that we cannot give much credence to this Ethiopic tale; even if it have an historic nucleus, we could infer thence no more than that the Himyari king supposed the Jews to have had the best of the argument and—as sometimes happened in such cases—ordered the execution of the unsuccessful debater.

According to most accounts there was only one Jewish king, Dhu Nuwas, whose name figures in the Greek, Syriac, and Ethiopic sources in a variety of disguises. Arab authors say that on conversion he took the name Joseph, whereas the Ethiopic sources call him Phineas [1]—which is certainly nearer his pagan name than the other. If this personage thought fit to take a Hebrew name on conversion, it is strange that the Medinese Jews did not see the propriety of doing the like; and this confirms our suspicions as to the names which the Prophet's biography professes to record. Still, his taking *two* Jewish names is a suspicious circumstance. The history of this king is of great importance for that of Arabia, as his conduct is supposed to have led to an Abyssinian invasion, followed by a period of Abyssinian domination involving the establishment of Christianity in the south as the State religion, and leading to a rising which relied on Persian support and so introduced Persian suzerainty. The inscription on the mound of Marib confirms the oft-told tale to this extent, that after a unitarian period Christianity became dominant in South Arabia under one Abrahah, lieutenant of the king of Axum. The details about which epigraphy is silent are that the Abyssinians were induced by the Byzantine emperor to invade Arabia in order to punish a king of Saba who had treacherously taken the Christian city Najran, and put those of its inhabitants who would not repudiate their religion to a hideous death. The Jewish king had sent to the Lakhmid ruler of Hirah to record his exploit and invite this ruler to do the like to such Christians as were within his realm; a Byzantine envoy who was present had reported the matter in Constantinople, and this action led to the expedition. Different authorities introduce different details, some of them accounting for the action of the Jewish king, others for that of the Byzantine emperor. The date of the chief event, the massacre of Najran, if it be historical, has been fixed as A.D. 524. South Arabia under

[1] See the elaborate article of Fell in ZDMG. xxxv.

went many vicissitudes in the century which elapsed between that date and the Prophet's Flight, but it seems clear that Judaism was not re-established there, though the Abyssinian rule with its Christian cult was ultimately shaken off. When Mohammed sent his governors into this part of Arabia, which fell into his grasp without resistance, it appears that there were both Jewish and Christian communities established there, but that the bulk of the people were still pagan. The names of the *qails* or chieftains are certainly Arabian; neither Judaism nor Christianity appears to have left any trace on the nomenclature.

Even this solitary Jewish king, whose name appears in so many forms, had his existence threatened by M. J. Halévy,[1] who maintained that by Jews the Christian writers meant Arians, and that the whole story of the persecution of Najran was got up by the Jacobites to divert persecution from themselves to the Jews. This suggestion seems to have been refuted by the Abbé Duchesne, who asks by what name the Jews were designated, if the Arians were called Jews? And indeed there is no doubt that the Christians of the sixth century had a clear idea of the beliefs of the Jews. There is a lengthy discussion preserved supposed to have taken place before the Abyssinian viceroy Abrahah between the Archbishop Gregentius and a Jewish doctor named Erban at the Himyari capital and in the palace which was called Threlletos.[2] It is finally terminated by a miracle. There is no doubt that Erban is meant to advocate the doctrines which are ordinarily known as Jewish, and he complains that the Old Testament is misrepresented by the Christians who quote the LXX version. When, in consequence of the miracle, all the Jews have been baptized, a law is issued prescribing forcible intermarriage between the communities, Jewish boys and girls to be married to Christian girls and boys respectively. As by this Archbishop's code of laws no one over thirteen of either sex was to remain unmarried, this would lead to speedy amalgamation of the communities.

To what extent this dialogue is historical is not clear; in any case it makes it certain that when in connexion with the Himyar the Jews are mentioned by Greek authors, Jews and not Arians are intended. What seems remarkable about the document is its curious fairness; the arguments of the Jew are such as a

[1] *Revue des Études Juives*, xviii (1889).
[2] Migue, *Patrologia Graeca*, lxxxvi.

defender of Judaism might very well have employed, and the result leaves the parties so nearly equal that only divine intervention can settle the dispute. The code of laws for the people of Dhafar, which precedes the dialogue, contains much curious matter.

Probably then it is not permissible to accept all Halévy's conclusions, and, indeed, the documents last cited are quite familiar with the Jewish king of the many names. It may be granted that Halévy has succeeded in proving the spuriousness of the Syriac letter of Simeon of Beth Arsham, which gives a highly coloured account of the whole affair of the persecution, but he is compelled to admit the genuineness of two other contemporary documents in Syriac, and these certainly identify the religion of the persecutors with the Judaism of the New Testament. But if the Jews could effect persecution on the scale described in these documents, they must themselves have been in power; for the Bishop Jacob of Sarug is clear that the actual persecutors are not heathens but Jews; he gives the heathens no part in the business. Their being in power is explained by the tradition of the king's conversion; and Halévy's supposition that the Arabic name of the king is a corruption of Greek or Syriac forms of it seems far less likely than the converse. It is a curious circumstance that the Hisn Ghurab inscription, which deals with this king's end, fails to mention his name. The conversion of this king, if it be a fact of history, is to be put together with other evidences of Arabian movements in favour of monotheism, such as the biographers of Mohammed report and such as certain inscriptions reveal. Since Mohammed himself came near being a convert to Judaism, it might well be that when once the idea was current that paganism was no longer up to date, this king thought the Jews the best informed on religious matters, and accepted their teaching. That such a personage might persecute other sects, especially when there was a political motive for doing so, is not beyond the bounds of probability. But without an account of the affair from Jews or Judaized Arabs we may well be misled concerning the rights and wrongs thereof.

It is not quite clear whether epigraphic evidence as yet certifies the existence of Jewish communities in Arabia. An inscription made up of two broken stones was published by Glaser [1] and afterwards by Winckler,[2] which might seem to

[1] *Revue des Études Juives*, xxiii. 121.
[2] AOF. i. 340.

clench the matter; only its phraseology is very different from Hebrew or Jewish usage. The *Rahman* is therein styled *the Rahman who is in heaven and Israel and their god, lord of Yahud* (i.e. the Jews). Glaser admits the possibility that he may not have copied the inscription accurately, and this admission seriously vitiates the evidence. Halévy [1] seems to have succeeded in showing that its author must have been a pagan and to have made it improbable that it even alludes to Israel or the Jews; indeed the selection by the writer of the philologically correct sibilant [2] to represent the *s* of *Israel* in the Sabaean script implies a higher degree of scholarship than we should expect in an Arabian Jew of the early centuries of our era. We may trust the inscription as far as *Rahman*, but no further.

A British Museum inscription exhibiting this name for the Deity was carefully edited by Mordtmann and Müller in 1896,[3] and this evidently contains doctrines which approach the monotheism of Mohammed. Forgiveness of sins, acceptance of sacrifice, 'association' in the sense of polytheism, a near and a distant world, and the ascription of both evil and good to God are all contained in this tablet, which, though somewhat damaged, is on the whole quite legible. The inferences to be drawn from this tablet seem so far-reaching that some hesitation is felt about eliciting them all. Was Mohammed's theology not, as the Qur'an so emphatically represents it, a fresh start in Arabia traceable, as the tradition suggests, to contact of the Prophet with Jews and Christians on his travels, or at Meccah, but merely the introduction into North Arabia of a system which had possibly for some centuries been, if not actually dominant, yet at least current in the South? Was the Judaism, even of the king Dhu Nuwas monotheism of this type, roughly identified with Judaism by those whose acquaintance with both systems was superficial, just as Mohammed's doctrine was at an early period called Sabiism owing to its resembling that cult in certain ceremonies? The Moslem tradition contains so little that is trustworthy about preceding and rival systems that such possibilities are open. At least the Qur'anic technicality *shirk*, association of other beings with Allah, whose source had previously eluded us, is here traced to its home.

In 1889, D. H. Müller published, after squeezes by Doughty and Euting, a number of inscriptions, among which were several

[1] *Revue des Études Juives*, xxiii.

[2] .

[3] WZKM. x. 287.

in a till then unknown variety of the Sabaean script. These were called Lihyani by the editor owing to the fact that some of them were dated by kings of Lihyan. They were found at al-'Ula in North Arabia. Müller, judging by the script, assigned them to a period of 1000 or 1200 years before Mohammed's time. Some of the phrases suggested to him the possibility of Jewish influence, though he was unwilling to assert this positively.

Shortly afterwards, his adversary Glaser declared that Müller had antedated these inscriptions by a great number of years and that they belonged to a Jewish kingdom in North Arabia not earlier than the third century A. D. The Jewish elements seemed insufficient to support this inference, as they were confined to certain linguistic phenomena, especially the Hebrew article, which is undoubtedly surprising, though the article assumes various forms in different dialects. Further there were certain phrases which were reminiscent of the Hebrew Bible, though even of these the interpretation was far from certain.

The archaeological mission of Jaussen and Savignac to this region led to the securing of additional squeezes and photographs, and some inscriptions containing fresh names of Lihyani kings, as well, as has been seen, as that of a king of Dedan. The bulk of the texts are evidently pagan, and though the language abounds in obscure expressions, it does not easily lend itself to illustration from the Hebrew. We have already dealt with a remarkable name which is clearly compounded with the divine name *Yah* or *Yaho*, and seen that the evidence is altogether against its being Jewish; neither is it all clear that another name which the editors read as *Azariah* can be Jewish; everything depends on the reading of the second letter of this word. The new inscriptions do not appear to furnish any synchronism which would enable us to date the kings of Libyan with certainty.

It is clearly then less certain than it used to be that Judaism ever held sway in any part of Arabia. We rarely think of it as a proselytizing system, and there is a well-known place in the Talmud where the intending proselyte is warned that he must expect no worldly advantage, but the contrary in this dispensation. Such wholesale conversions as occasionally are recorded were due to the activity of some king who had come in contact with the system and found it attractive. Where, however, the Arabian kings speak, they do not betray Judaism, but monotheism, which appears to have been worship of the Rahman; to those cases of the worship of the Rahman that have been mentioned we may

add one of the year A. D. 468,[1] which records how the authors built their house with the aid of the Rahman; the rest of the inscription shows no trace of Judaism. If the repairer of the mound of Marib was a Jew by creed, it is remarkable that his language shows no trace of Biblical phraseology, or other trace of the Jewish system. On the whole then the epigraphic evidence is in favour of Halévy's theory, if in a modified form.

The origin of the Jewish communities of Yathrib or Medinah must also remain in obscurity.

Inquiry into the affairs of these Yathribite Jews leaves on the whole a vague impression on the mind. The mere notion of Jewish tribes, comparable to the Arab tribes, has something surprising in it; when in Islamic times we meet with Israelites in Moslem cities, where the tribal organization of the Arabs was to some extent maintained, as in Basrah, there is no idea of the Jews being similarly divided into tribes; if we hear of tribes at all, they are those whose names are familiar from the Old Testament. The formula 'sons of' *Banu* implies ancestors, or, if Robertson Smith be right, totems; of the names which follow *Banu* in this case, some resemble the one, and one at least the other. If these tribes were immigrants from Palestine, they would not have names containing characteristically Arabic consonants. It is surprising, even if they were converts to Judaism, that they should not have called themselves by something indicative of their adopted faith. Now we shall presently see that Mohammed, having at first preached a god whose name was Rahman, at some time without absolutely abandoning that designation, took pains to substitute Allah for it. He had then some powerful reason for dissociating himself from the former name, and the hostility of the monotheistic communities of Yathrib would supply one that was sufficient. It is not clear that any other recorded experience of his would have been sufficient to effect such a change. Yet this name, though known to the Jews, is not with them in such common use that to discard it would be a sign of hostility to them. Further, there is a fact which has attracted attention in the Gospels, to which something analogous is found in these Yathribite controversies: it is the silence of the records concerning the antagonists. When a system is threatened, and the danger which menaces it is serious, if local advocates of consequence cannot be found, some who are more competent are fetched from elsewhere. Just then as the Acts of

[1] CIH. 7.

the Apostles knows at least one name of a Jewish doctor which the Oral Tradition also immortalized, we might expect some antagonist whose fame abode among the Jews to have entered the lists with Mohammed in Medinah. One is therefore inclined to regard the term Judaism applied to these Medinese tribes as indicating some form of monotheism which for want of a better term we call Rahmanism, such as is found in the southern parts of the Peninsula, which may indeed have taken its leading ideas from Judaism, but was by no means identical therewith.

We need find no fault with the Jewish Oral Tradition for neglecting the supposed Judaism of Arabia. A Jewish kingdom might have been expected to become a centre for the Jews of the Dispersion. It certainly was nothing of the kind. Neither do the supposed Jews of Medinah appear to have produced any man whose name was worth preserving.

Judaism cannot indeed be removed from the doctrines of Mohammed himself, since the Qur'an consists largely of material taken from either the Old Testament or the Jewish Oral Tradition; though it must be admitted that the most woeful ignorance is displayed by the compilers and interpreters of the Qur'an about the part played by the Jews; of one particular atrocity attributed to them we should infer from Surah iv. 48 that it was committed by the contemporaries of Mohammed, whereas from ii. 87 it would seem no less clear that it was done by the contemporaries of Moses! Part of the atrocity lay in using one of two precisely synonymous phrases in lieu of another; which may well have been due to intentional malice, but it is not clear why it should have wounded the feelings of either Moses or Mohammed. If we, following a hint in the Qur'an, suppose the Judaism of that work to be traceable to a Jew resident in Meccah, we are not really helped; for the proud claim of this work, that its contents could not possibly have been known to Mohammed except by revelation becomes too audacious, if the matter was easily accessible to any one in Meccah. Here, too, inquiry seems to bring us into mist which we are at present unable to clear.

The archaeologists profess to know of a Jewish king of Taima who ruled shortly before the rise of Islam. He has the Hebrew name Samuel, pronounced Samau'al, and that of his father or grandfather is given as 'Adiyah, evidently identical with the 'Adayah repeatedly found in the Old Testament. His fidelity is said to have given rise to a proverb, 'faithful as Samau'al'. The

narrative which explains it is to the effect that when the poet-king Imru'u'l-Qais was fleeing to Constantinople, he deposited with this personage, who had built himself a parti-coloured tower, his arms and goods. The commander of a Persian army, who had captured Samau'al's son, demanded these goods, threatening to put the son to death if they were not surrendered; Samau'al declined to surrender them, and his son was cut in twain. It is not quite certain that this Samau'al is a historical personage. H. Winckler resolves him into a sun-myth,[1] as he does so many other personages; but the process of his reasoning is not worth reproducing. The proverb might quite well have reference to the Samuel of the books which bear his name, since he (1 Sam. xii. 3) made loud attestation of his honesty. Moreover, it will presently be seen that the narrative which explains the proverb is not quite consistent.

This Samau'al is best known as an Arabic poet, and before we consider his claims to distinction in this capacity we may consider what can be gleaned from the pre-Islamic poets about the Jews. It is asserted that the works of these persons were buried under the palace at Hirah, and unearthed by the adventurer Mukhtar b. Abi 'Ubaid in the seventh decade of Islam;[2] and Bentley long ago observed that buried writings display some remarkable characteristics. Perhaps therefore we ought not to be surprised when we find that though these pre-Islamic bards were some of them pagans, some Christians and some Jews, their acquaintance with their respective systems rarely exceeds what is found in the Qur'an; and that although this work was *ex hypothesi* revealed after their time, they occasionally exhibit a fair acquaintance with its contents, and indeed know things which apparently could only be learned from it. Thus that King David, or, as the Qur'an calls him, Dawud, was to cuirasses what Stradivarius is to violins, would appear to be known only from the Qur'an;[3] but with pre-Islamic poets this is a common-place; Tarafah, whom Pere Cheikho dates A. D. 564, as well as Zuhair and Husain b. Humam, who come somewhat nearer the Prophet's time, are familiar with David's cuirasses.[4] The poet Nabighah of Dhubyan, dated by the same authority A. D. 604, not only calls Solomon by his Qur'anic name Sulaiman, but paraphrases what is said in the Qur'an about the king's dealings with

[1] MVAG. vi. 262.
[2] Ibn Jinni, *Khasa'is*, i. 393.
[3] xxxiv. 10.
[4] *Christian Arabic Poets*, 309, 538, 738.

the Jinn.[1] The Christian poet 'Adi b. Zaid, who is dated 587, quite properly knows about the fate of the 'people of Nuh' or Noah, but he is also acquainted with the fate of 'Ad and Thamud, which might seem to be information peculiar to the Qur'an, yet a commonplace with the pre-Islamic bards, since another poet, al-Afwah al-Audi, dated A. D. 570, is quite familiar with it.[2] Another, Ufnun, whose date is given as 567, speaks of mankind as 'children of Adam',[3] which can scarcely in Arabia have been a pre-Qur'anic appellation; and he too knows a variety of matter which the Qur'an claims at any rate to have revealed to the Arabs for the first time.

Although these compositions make use to so large an extent of the privilege accorded buried writings of knowing things only known to a later age, they have very little indeed to say about the Jews, who would seem to have played so important a part in the history of the peninsula. One Harith b. 'Abbad, whom Cheikho locates in the middle of the sixth century A.D., compares the disturbance wrought by winds to the beating by the Jews of *rauqash* and drums on a feast-day.[4] The italicized word is a puzzle, and is doubtless intended for a Jewish technicality. 'Urwah b. al-Ward, whom Cheikho dates A.D. 616, mentions it as a dogma of the Jews of Khaibar, that one who brays ten times escapes the fever of that place.[5] The poet 'Abid b. al-Arra speaks of Jewish sailors or traders on vessels of the Tigris, but his commentator thinks he means Nabataeans.[6] Labid compares one who feels for his horse-cloth with a Jew at prayer.[7] 'Adi b. Zaid thinks of a wine-dealer as a Jew.[8] With Imru'u'l-Qais a Jewish building is proverbial for strength.[9] It is clear that even a number of allusions of this sort would not throw much light on the condition of the Jews in Arabia at the time when these poets, real or imaginary, sang. Even a poet of Medinah in the Prophet's time, Qais b. al-Khatim, displays little acquaintance with these neighbours. According to him the Jews have a temple (*mihrab*) with a dome reaching heaven high, wherein are fragrant odours.[10] He confirms the statement of the archaeologists that the Jewish tribes Nadir and Quraizah were called the *kahinani* or 'two priests'.

The Qur'an asserts that poets say what they do not do. The

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[1] Ibid., p. 663. Compare Surah xxxiv. 11.
[2] Ibid., p. 71.
[3] Ibid., p. 193.
[4] Ibid., p. 279.
[5] Ibid., p. 912.
[6] Ed. Lyall, 30, 5.
[7] Ed. Brockelmann, xxxix. 30.
[8] *Aghani*, vi. 123.
[9] *Christian Arabic Poets*, 53.
[10] Ed. Kowalski, 1914.

theory of the archaeologists is rather that they say what they actually do; if any pre-Islamic hero is noted for having done anything, he is likely to have composed verses wherein he records his exploits. The Judaized Arabs were not likely to reject this commendable practice, and there were a considerable number of verses ascribed to them. One Ja'far b. Mohammed Tayalisi [1] made a collection of Jewish poetry, based on an earlier collection by the archaeologist Sukkari (*ob*. 275 A.H.). He tells a story about it which seems instructive. The brother of the Caliph Mu'tamid, called Muwaffaq or Nasir, famous for his victory over the Zanji rebel (270 A.H), requested his vizier, Ismail b. Bulbul, to furnish him with poems by Jews. Ismail applied to Mubarrad, one of the most eminent philologists of his time, for the compositions required; but Mubarrad asserted that he knew of no poems by Jews! Ismail thereupon applied to another philologist, Tha'lab (*ob*. 291), who stated that he had been collecting poems by Jews for fifty years with a view to such an occasion. Ismail had a copy of Tha'lab's *corpus poeseos Judaicae* made and forwarded to Muwaffaq, who rewarded Tha'lab handsomely.

It appears from this anecdote that when a Caliph and a vizier wanted archaeological matter of any sort, they had no great difficulty in procuring it.

Mubarrad, possibly owing to this experience, is represented in an anecdote as fabricating verses himself without scruple;[2] the anecdote reproduced indicates, not that he knew of no verses ascribed to Jews, but that he assumed that they were all fabrications. For indeed several works earlier than his time, and assuredly well known to him, such as the *Hamasah* of Abu Tammam, the *Tabaqat al-Shu'ara* of Jumahi, and the *Asma'iyyat*, contain poems ascribed to Jews, which cannot have escaped him. His work, the *Kamil*, contains a whole series of notes, either by himself or his editor (a later grammarian), indicating the uncertainty of the ascription of various verses which it quotes; an ode is cited as by Umayyah b. Abi 'l-Salt, which the editor says is by one of the Khawarij who was executed by Hajjaj: the former was earlier than Mohammed, the latter came near the end of the first century of Islam. [3] There was fairly general agreement that certain verses were by the son of Mohammed's encomiast Hassan b. Thabit, but others ascribed them to a wholly different person.[4]

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[1] MS. Sultan Fatih 5306. I owe this information to Mr. Krenkow.
[2] Yaqut, *Irshad*, i. 126.
[3] Ed. Cairo, i. 44.
[4] Ibid., 174.

A couplet was attributed by some to the negro bard Nusaib, but by others to the famous Kuthayyir called after his mistress 'Azzah.[1] Possibly then Mubarrad, though he knew of odes ascribed to Jews, did not suppose that any one of consequence would take such ascription seriously.

The highest compliment paid to the poetical capacity of the Medinese Jews is to be found in a story produced by the very learned author of the *Aghani*, and traced by him to the eminent archaeologist Abu 'Ubaidah (*ob*. about 207). In the days before Mohammed's migration to Medinah the great poet Nabighah Dhubyani visited that city, where the hubbub of the Jewish market of the Banu Qainuqa' made his camel shy; he started an ode dealing with this subject, and challenged the Jewish bard Rabi' b. Abi 'l-Huqaiq, chief of the Quraizah, to cap verses, by improvising in the same metre and rhyme. Rabi' showed such readiness and skill that Nabighah pronounced him 'the greatest poet among mankind'! [2]

A whole chapter is devoted to the poetical compositions of the Jews in Medinah and its neighbourhood by the earliest historian of Arabic poetry.[3] Some of those collected by Jumahi clearly are supposed to be by contemporaries of the Prophet, one of them being that Ka'b b. al-Ashraf who figures in his biography; the historian asserts that he belonged to the tribe Tai on the father's side, but to the Banu Nadir on the mother's. There is nothing in any of these verses which points to any difference between their authors and the other Arabs to whom verses are assigned in our collections. Their names are all—with the exception of that Samau'al with whom we are about to deal—pure Arabic. Ka'b b. al-Ashraf is charged with addressing his erotic prologues to the Prophet's wives, in consequence whereof Mohammed ordered him to be put to death; a form of retaliation which Arab morality would certainly approve, only one fancies that the poet would have avoided so risky a proceeding. The specimen furnished of his poetry contains the same boasts as odes of the kind usually contain; war, love, hospitality, and wine form the themes. Another of these poets warns his friend Usaid against hoarding wealth; another wonders what the mourners will say over his grave, assuming that they will use the stock expression of the Arabian dirge 'be not far away'. This particular bard does not appear to have heard of the future

[1] Ibid., 209.
[2] xxi. 92.
[3] Ibn Sallam al-Jumahi, *ob*. 232 A.H.

life. One of these erotic bards, according to another authority, was not a Jew, and in the case of another both the name and the text exhibit great varieties. The verses are all said to be 'good', i.e. correct according to the various standards employed, and they appear to exhibit no mark of dialect. Some verses by a Jew of Khaibar of Omar's time are cited by an author of the fifth Islamic century, but it is suggested that they are spurious.[1]

It scarcely seems worth while transliterating the names of these personages, who include among them one poetess, named Sarah. This lady's name is at least plausible, whereas the names of the others are indistinguishable from those of the Arabs. Once or twice odes are cited with the observation, 'I fancy it is by one of the Jews',[2] but the reason for such ascription is not apparent. That any odes by Jews could have survived the clearance of the Peninsula from the nation by Mohammed and Omar is simply not to be believed. But historians who can produce the Arabic dirge composed by Adam over Abel would have comparatively little difficulty in producing those wherein the Jews of Medinah and Taima deplored the misfortunes which had befallen them, or, if this was thought desirable, boasted of their exploits in love and war.

Samau'al is the only one who has risen to a *diwan*, or 'collected works'. This collection was put together by the grammarian Niftawaihi (A.D. 858-935), and a copy of it was discovered in Damascus by the meritorious Carmelite, Anastase of Baghdad, and published by the no less meritorious Jesuit, Cheikho of Beyrut, in 1909. It contains nine odes and fragments, to which the learned editor has been able to add a few more fragments preserved in other books. It has on the reader an effect produced by many another *diwan* of an Arabic poet; we do not seem to know much more at the end than when we started.

The first poem is of considerable celebrity, as a part of it was introduced by Abu Tammam into the first section of his *Hamasah*, which constitutes the most famous and popular collection of early Arabic verse. It contains some spirited lines which have become proverbial. 'If a man's honour be not tainted with baseness, then every garment which he wears is comely.' 'She taunts us with the paucity of our numbers; I reply that the noble are few.' 'When a prince passes away from among us, there arises another, speaking the language of the great and doing their deeds.' The whole ode, though placed by Abu Tammam in the category of

[1] Yaqut, *Irshad*, i. 190.
[2] Jahiz, *Bayan*, ed. 1, ii. 138.

'Courage', belongs rather to that which is called *Mufakharah* 'outboasting', i.e. exercises wherein poets proclaimed the superiority of their own achievements, tribes, or families to those of others. The author claims that the love of death which is inherent in his tribe shortens their lives; unlike the tribes 'Amir and Salul, who shrink from death and so live long. Not a man in his tribe ever dies in his bed.

The assertions of these poets in their boasting-matches cannot indeed be taken at their face value; but this particular assertion, it must be admitted, conflicts remarkably with the testimony of the Qur'an, if the ode be really the production of a Jewish poet. In Surah ii. 88 the Jews are challenged to desire death, if, as they assert, they have a monopoly of Paradise; and the speaker adds that they certainly will not desire it, and indeed are keener about living than any one else, even than the pagans; any one of them would gladly live a thousand years.

The author of the ode declares that paucity of numbers does his tribe no harm, since their neighbours, i.e. those who seek their protection, are respected, whereas those who seek the protection of more numerous tribes are humiliated. The reason of this is that his tribe lodges those whom it protects on a mountain so high that the gaze is strained in the endeavour to reach its top; its roots stretch beneath the soil and its branches reach heavenward and are inaccessible. The language of these lines suggests that the author is speaking figuratively; the mountain whereon he sets his clients is the dauntless courage of his tribe.[1] It was, however, interpreted literally; and since Samau'al was supposed to be the possessor of a fortress called al-Ablaq, to which A'sha of Bahilah, a poet of the commencement of Islam, makes reference, the ode was attributed to him, though there were other claimants. The evidence which produced this ascription is clearly of the weakest; for Samau'al was not the only owner of a fortress in North Arabia, and it is improbable that a material fortress is described. Indeed, in another ode the two fortresses are distinguished.

The second poem in the collection is also preserved in a compilation by the grammarian Asma'i (*ob*. 216 A.H.). This is supposed to be marked as Jewish by certain dialectic peculiarities. In Asma'i's text it is not clearly spurious; in that of Niftawaihi it contains five lines which condemn it, since this ostensibly Jewish bard states that he has heard of the apostle Yahya, i.e. John,

[1] In the Mu'allaqah of Lalid, 86, there is a similar phrase.

whom he names between Solomon and Joseph; he presently refers to Talut, who was appointed king, and Jalut, these being Qur'anic mutilations of the names Saul and Goliath, occurring in the second Surah of the Qur'an, which is evidently the source of the poet's inspiration. The order Solomon, John, Joseph, would by no means violate Qur'anic chronology, wherein Haman appears as a contemporary of Moses, and the Virgin Mary is the sister of Aaron; but the Jews were more particular. The père Cheikho is of course delighted with the chance of proving that Samau'al, like the rest of the pre-Islamic poets, was a Christian; but this endeavour is confronted by difficulties nearly as serious as those which result from our supposing the author to have been a Jew. This being so, the rest of the poem, which contains some Qur'anic embryology, as well as a confession of belief in the resurrection, is of the same stamp. Its main idea seems to be to furnish an example of a difficult word used in the Qur'an *muqit*, and otherwise to bolster up the travesties of Old Testament stories which that volume contains, by showing that a really meritorious Jew prior to Islam had held the same.

In poems 3, 4, and 6 Samau'al mentions 'Adiya, whom he calls his grandfather, and indeed the last of these odes is autobiographical; he asserts that he has guided a vast army in the darkness of the night, as it made for the dominions of a king, and that he had dealt faithfully with the cuirasses of the Kindite, i.e. Imru'u'l-Qais. Now, in the Hebrew Bible the name is 'Adhayah, not 'Adiya; it is much more likely that a Moslem Arab would have mispronounced it than that Samau'al would have mispronounced it himself. Further, the poet asserts that his castle was built by this 'Adiya; but the poet A'sha of Bahilah, who is supposed to confirm the story of Samau'al, asserts that this castle was built by Solomon the son of David! Al-A'sha declares that Samau'al in this castle was surrounded with oriental luxury, but for all that could not escape death. Moreover, the story told to illustrate al-A'sha's poem conflicts with that which explains the proverb about Samau'al's fidelity. Al-A'sha had satirized the Kalbites, and then been taken prisoner by a Kalbite chieftain; he composed some verses which he sent to Samau'al's son Shuraih, who came to the camp and requested the release of the prisoner. This was granted, and Shuraih offered the poet the refuge of his fortress; the poet preferred the gift of a fast camel whereon he could ride to his home. Now since, according to the Samau'al story, what that person did was the reverse of

ransoming a prisoner, viz. letting a prisoner who was his own son be killed, in lieu of ransoming him with some cuirasses at the expense of his good faith, the poet could not have used a less cogent example than that of Samau'al for his own release. It seems clear that according to al-A'sha Samau'al was asked to surrender some person who was in his power under threat that unless he did so his own son would be killed. His reply was that whatever happened he would protect the person who had taken refuge with him.

In the seventh poem the poet boasts of his preparations for war and speaks of the military prowess of the *kahinani*, in support of Qais, a tribe which sits at home while water is being warmed for them and calls our fighting sport. The two *kahins* are supposed to be two of the Jewish tribes of Yathrib. These verses, which in any case contain obscure allusions, are perhaps more likely to be genuine, i.e. composed by some tribal poet on a real occasion, than the others; the mention of the two *kahins* may have led the archaeologists to fix on Samau'al.

In 1906 the *diwan* of Samau'al was augmented with another ode. As has already been seen the Jewish sources of information were absolutely silent about Arabian Jews of this period; any knowledge which later Jewish authors had displayed about them had come from Moslem sources. The first copy of the new poem this time came from a Jewish source; in the *genizah* brought by the late Dr. Schechter from Fustat Dr. Hirschfeld discovered an Arabic poem in Hebrew characters attributed to Samau'al, naturally identified with the person to whom the other odes are attributed. It was shortly afterwards reprinted in the *Mashriq*, an Arabic monthly issued by the Beyrut Jesuits, and Arabic scholars in the East were requested to look out for other copies: a request which speedily brought two replies. One of these was a copy containing rather more than was desirable, for it ends with the verse:

> At the end of the days came our Messiah and he gave the children of the world the peace of perfection (i.e. perfect peace).

The author of this line must clearly have been a Christian, whereas Samau'al—in spite of his reference to the apostle John —had figured as a Jew.

The ode itself is in the boasting style, only whereas Ode 1 in the Diwan boasts of the author's tribe, this boasts of the Jewish

nation, and enumerates their glories, chiefly, though not exclusively, those recorded in the Qur'an. Proper names are on the whole avoided, and this is prudent, as those found in the Qur'an are often so mutilated as to be unrecognizable.

One of the copies which the notice in the Mashriq brought to light was taken from a collection in Baghdad, dated 1816; the other, found in Mosul, 'from an antique volume'. The Mosul MS. ascribed the new ode to Samau'al the Qurazite, i. e. of the tribe Quraizah, one of those settled in Yathrib when the Prophet came thither, and ultimately massacred by him to a man. Apparently then the author of the new ode was not our old friend of Taima, who is sometimes called a Ghassanite, but a Jew of Medinah, who had adopted Christianity, if the last verse be genuine,

The case of Samau'al's poems is analogous to many others of pre-Islamic poets, about whose supposed works it is permissible to be sceptical. The son or grandson of Samau'al is said to have embraced Islam; his ancestor's verses *may* have been treasured in the family, and thus in time got into the possession of the antiquarians. On the other hand, the most important of them seem to be not so much what Samau'al is likely to have said as what Mohammedans would think he might be expected to say: in so far as they are anything but commonplaces such as are to be found in the mouth of every Arab versifier. Further, for many of the verses there are other claimants besides Samau'al.

The depositing of the cuirasses with Samau'al bears some resemblance to the story that when Mohammed died his cuirass was in pawn with a Jew; and it is noticeable that what Samau'al promises himself in the event of his son being slain is not vengeance on the slayer, but the probability of another son being born to him. This argument is found in the armoury of the Medinese Jews also. Apparently then if we take the diwan of Samau'al as illustrating either the ways of the Jewish colonists in Arabia or the impression thereof which was left on the minds of the antiquarians, they had adopted some of the Arab ways, but not that most important institution, the blood-feud. The lavish hospitality which some of the verses celebrate was easily adopted by the wealthy; yet it is noticeable that according to the poems Samau'al entertains his guests with the flesh of *camels*, which as a Jew he would not have been entitled to do.

If, therefore, we are justified in regarding Samau'al as an

historical personage, and in supposing some basis of truth to underlie the story of his fidelity, it would seem likely that his grandfather 'Adayah was either an Arabized Jew or a Judaized Arab, who had acquired wealth and built himself a fort, much as the Yathribite Jews appear to have done. Evidently the legend envisaged Samau'al and his family as Arabs of the type depicted in the early poetry, whose interests lay in wine, women, and versification, and who acquired fame by lavish hospitality and reckless courage. This is by no means the type of' Israelite depicted in the Qur'an, whose qualities more nearly resemble those of a trading community, people who had welcomed the Prophet in the hope that he would introduce order and quiet, and found to their cost that he had increased external strife, if he had partly allayed that which was internal. The Prophet's language about them, when it is not that of an outraged controversialist, is not without respect for the learning of their Rabbis, whom however he thinks they over-esteem. Otherwise it is such as might have been used by the spectator of the mediaeval ghetto. In relation to the native Arabs he thought of them as an inferior caste. They were doomed to everlasting squalor, just as the Christians were doomed to everlasting discord.

Supposing then that a Jewish kingdom ever existed in South Arabia, it left little impression on the North Arabian mind, and its fate in South Arabia itself was comparable to that of a still later Jewish state, whose existence would not be credible had we not contemporary authority for both its rise and fall. It is historically recorded that the Khazar nation was converted to Judaism in the time of Harun al-Rashid. When Mas'udi composed his *Golden Meadows* the Khazars were still of that persuasion; in the year 951 they applied for help to a Moslem prince, who made it a condition of his assistance that they should change over to Islam and this condition was accepted. Judaism ceased to be the State religion; and though Islam recognizes and tolerates Judaism as a system, those who retained it at once sank to the status of an inferior caste, if, indeed, they were permitted to remain in the country.

South Arabia in the two centuries which preceded Mohammed underwent some violent religious transformation; enforced monotheism, enforced Christianity, probably a recrudescence of paganism, and even some attempt to introduce Mazdianism when the Abyssinian dynasty was overthrown by Persian aid. It is

not surprising that tribes accustomed to these violent shiftings made little difficulty about the acceptance of Islam.

The brief consideration which we have given to the results of South Arabian epigraphy have, I fancy, impressed certain facts on the mind. One is, how much more the emigrants brought with them from their home than without this evidence would have been guessed. If at the time of the rise of the 'Abbasids there was a school which placed the Arabs in civilization and intellectual attainments below the other races which had accepted Islam, this was because the Arab was regarded as, to use Euting's phrase, 'the parasite of the camel'; the nomad of the tales and lays, who at best is a noble savage, whose movements are directed by the needs or the auguries of his herds, and whose organization cannot rise above that of the tribe. No such picture is suggested by the epigraphy of the Arabian kingdoms, with their walled towns, their elaborate architecture, their systems of irrigation, the long lines of their dynasties, and their stately yet curiously modest inscriptions. Here we have a civilization probably higher than, in any case at least as high as, anything attained by any Islamic state prior to the European renaissance. And, as Hartmann has pointed out, emigration is far from being confined to nomads; he is probably right in thinking that it is far more commonly from those communities where, owing to an enhanced requirement of comfort, over-population speedily makes itself felt, and needs an outlet.

The origin of the Israelitish people from Arabia, if not ascertained, seems at least the hypothesis best suited to the facts which are before us. The origin of Islam from Judaism is far more than a hypothesis; for even if we regard Christianity as a coalescence of Judaism and Hellenism, and suppose the first to have influenced the beginnings of Islam, the Hellenic elements which percolated were so few as to be negligible. If we regard Islam as based on the Sabianism of Harran, that, too, appears to have been an Abrahamic system, and so not far removed from Judaism; and even the monotheism of South Arabia, of which we as yet know so little, cannot well have been unconnected with the religion of the Israelites. There is then some interest in comparing what the Israelites took out of Arabia with what they brought back thither after the lapse of at the least two thousand years. Professor Goldziher in a classical treatise has touched on this question: only dealing with the Arabia, not of the inscriptions, but of the Moslem archaeologists, and with

Islam not as it ever was, but as it purported to be, he has drawn a picture of which both parts are idealistic, an imaginary Islam contrasted with an imaginary *Jahiliyyah*, or period of paganism. Others will hold that Islam is to be learned from the histories rather than from the law-books, and that the days of Paganism are to be estimated from the stone and copper records rather than from archaeological reconstructions by Moslems.

I have endeavoured to collect and interpret the information which Arabian epigraphy supplies for the relations of Israel with Arabia. The epigraphist Lidzbarski seems to have correctly indicated the source of the fascination which this type of study exercises on the mind of those who pursue it; it is that we are in the presence of the actual monuments whereto the authors who have so long been dust committed the record of their sentiments—gratitude, pride, shame, hope, sorrow, sense of ownership, fear of injury. We seem vividly to recall the emotions wherewith they contemplated the monuments of stone or copper executed by their order often in consequence of a demand made by the official spokesmen of the gods in whom they trusted, and for whom they felt such deep reverence and affection. The Himyari room in the British Museum, where a goodly collection of these monuments is exhibited, belonging to the three kingdoms of Saba, Main, and Hadramaut, transports us into an Arabia peopled not by illiterate nomads, but by communities great in the arts of peace no less than of war. And it is incumbent on any one who utilizes these and similar materials to think with gratitude in the first place of those enterprising antiquarians who at much personal risk penetrated the regions where these monuments were first erected, and brought them or copies of them to Europe. Among such collectors the names of Halévy and Glaser come easily first for the quantity and value of their finds. Nor should we forget those by whose ingenuity and learning the import of these documents has to some extent been made out.

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